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MORI points to 180 to 200 majority

Blair heading for No 10 say the polls

By PETER RIDDELL AND PHILIP WEBSTER

TONY BLAIR'S Labour Party is heading for a large Commons majority in today's general election to end a record 18 years of Conservative Government.

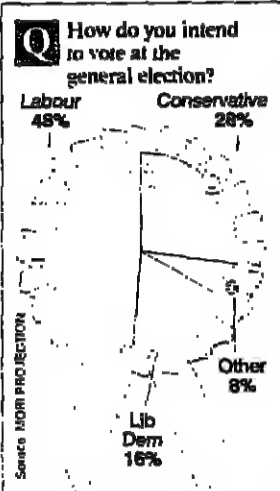
A MORI poll for *The Times*, taken on Tuesday and updated yesterday, shows that Labour has maintained its commanding lead throughout the campaign and that the Tories have failed to stage a last-minute recovery. Support for the Liberal Democrats appears to have firmed up in the last fortnight.

Labour is shown at 48 per cent, compared with 28 per cent for the Tories and 16 per cent for the Liberal Democrats. The Referendum Party is on 2 per cent. This is after telephone contacts with "soft" and wavering voters yesterday, which showed only a tiny shift against Labour.

A fifth of those questioned say they may still change their vote today, though these shifts may split evenly between the parties. There are also signs that turnout may be less than the 78 per cent recorded five years ago.

The MORI findings are broadly in line with the results of the final polls published in other papers this morning, which show an unprecedented large Labour lead for polling day. Taken at face value, and assuming no big regional variations, the poll suggests an overall Commons majority of between 180 and 200.

Tory strategists were privately conceding last night that they had lost, although



lifting the Tories to 28 and the Liberal Democrats to 16 per cent.

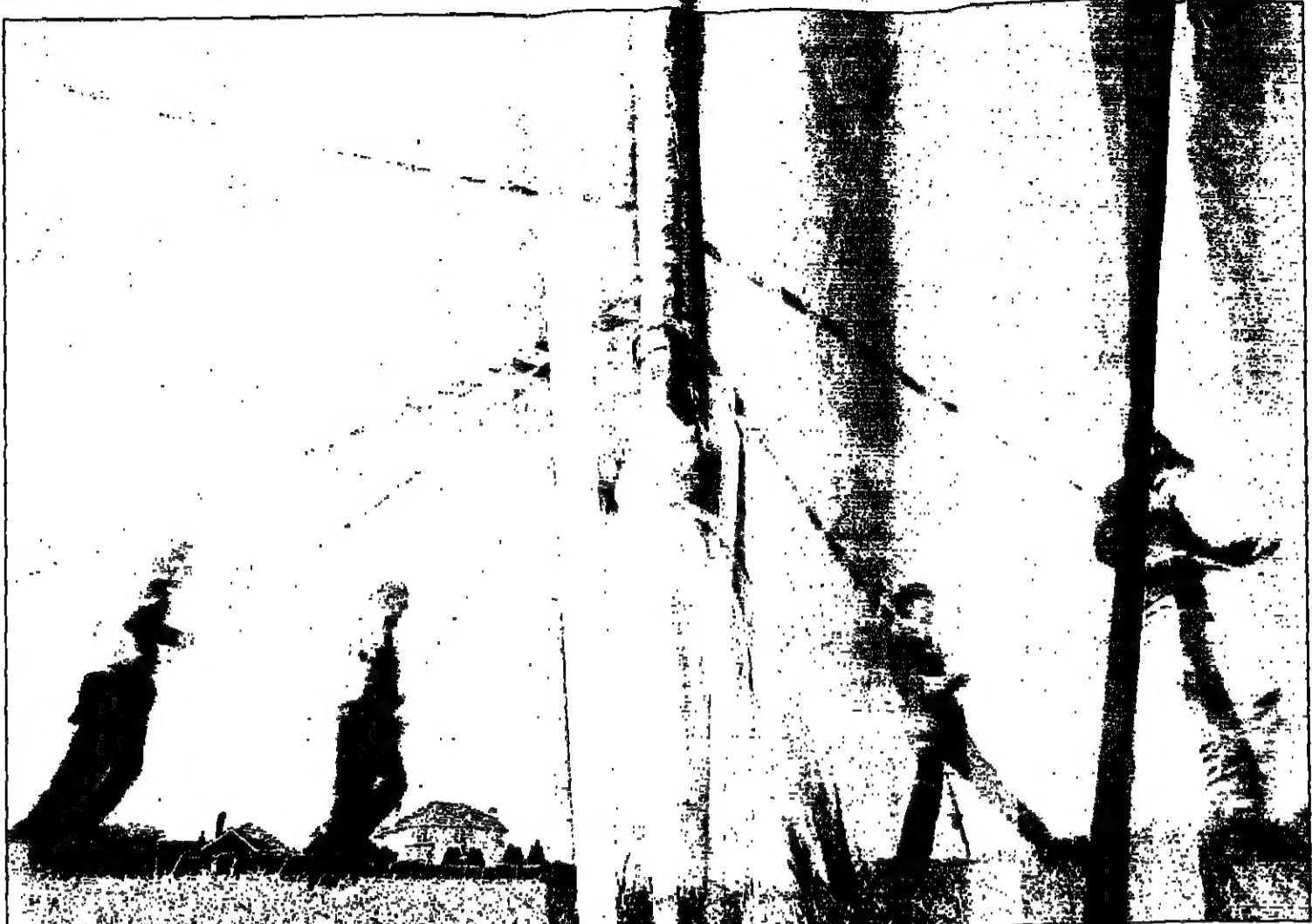
Other polls published today are broadly similar in showing a large Labour lead, although they vary considerably over its size. The smallest is *Gallup in The Daily Telegraph* which puts Labour on 46 per cent, against 33 per cent for the Tories — which would still mean a very large majority for Mr Blair. NOP for Reuters has a 50 to 28 per cent gap, while Harris for *The Independent* has a 48-31 per cent margin.

Mr Major and Mr Blair were studiously avoiding giving too much credence to the polls as they made their final pleas to the voters — Mr Blair said last night: "The polls have been wrong before and they can be wrong again. Every last vote counts."

The Prime Minister told undecided voters that the nation's success was "too good to give up". He said that people planning to switch to new Labour were falling for "the false attraction of a well packaged marketing scam".

Mr Blair portrayed a fifth Tory term as a "future which threatens every family in Britain". He said: "It is a choice between a Tory future with the end of the NHS as we know it, more failing schools, and with John Major unable to lead."

Continued on page 2, col 6



Preparing for a perfect May Day: Pupils at Binbrook Church of England primary school, Lincolnshire, practise for the village celebrations. The election forecast is for the hottest day of the year, 73F (23C) in England and Wales, but cooler and drier in Scotland

Heseltine in line for top job at GEC

By PATIENCE WHEATCROFT
BUSINESS EDITOR

MICHAEL HESELTINE could become the next chairman of the giant industrial group GEC. He is said to have made clear his interest in the position, now held by the former Conservative Cabinet minister Lord Prior, who is due to retire in September.

Sources close to the Deputy Prime Minister say that he has not totally given up his political ambitions and he would be tempted to stand if there were a Tory leadership election. "Being leader would undoubtedly be his first choice, but being chairman of GEC is now clearly his second," a senior Tory with strong City links said.

However, the company is said to have mixed feelings about the prospect

of Mr Heseltine as its top man. George Simpson, the former Rover chairman who became managing director last September, is said to be wary of such a high-profile appointment. However, Lord Weinstock, who bears the title Chairman Emeritus, is thought to be a strong advocate of Mr Heseltine's appointment.

Lord Weinstock joined his father-in-law's company in 1954 and ran it as managing director from 1963 until his retirement last year. His views are still listened to within the company.

Mr Heseltine does have more business credentials than most politicians. He launched the successful publishing company, Haymarket, and his family retains a major holding in the company through trusts. But if he were to pursue a business career now, a company operating on the world stage

— as GEC does — might have more appeal than returning to the helm at Haymarket.

With sales of almost £6 billion last year and profits of almost £1 billion, GEC is one of the world's leading industrial companies, with interests that range from defence and aerospace to making trains and Hotpoint cookers. For a Europhile such as Mr Heseltine, the company would also have the attraction of strong links with the French Thomson organisation.

As chairman, he would be expected to pay a major role in building the company. Lord Prior, who joined the company in 1984 and last year received a salary of £306,000, has travelled the world selling GEC to governments and other major customers. "It is not a sinecure," a company insider said. If he were to join GEC, Mr Heseltine

would saddle himself with a former Tory colleague, Richard Needham, the former trade and Northern Ireland minister, became a director in October 1995.

But Lord Prior laughed off the reports. He said: "I don't believe it. We are talking about my successor but we don't know who it is going to be yet. I have not heard his name mentioned. I am hoping to go in September but that will depend on whether we find the right person for the job."

Asked whether he thought Mr Heseltine would be a good replacement, he replied: "I have no information to suggest he would even be interested in the job. I think he will be more interested in the Tory leadership if there is a vacancy."

Pennington, page 29

THE TIMES

Poling stations are open from 7am to 10pm. You do not need your polling card to vote. A poll clerk will ask your name and address, and give you a ballot paper. Local government elections are also being contested in county council and unitary authority areas today. The results will be counted on Friday. If you do not know where your polling station is, contact your local authority.

The complete election guide:

A 16-page section with every result

Short tipped for Cabinet post as Labour prepares its team

By OUR POLITICAL EDITOR

CLARE SHORT, the controversial Labour leftwinger, is expected to gain a place in Tony Blair's first Cabinet if he wins today's election.

John Prescott, the deputy leader, will become Deputy Prime Minister and head a new super-ministry covering the environment, transport and regional affairs in the event of a Labour victory.

Gordon Brown will become Chancellor. Robin Cook, Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, Home Secretary, and David Blunkett, Education Secretary — the areas they have been shadowing in recent years.

Mr Mowlem, who has been recovering from treatment for a brain tumour, is expected to

become Northern Ireland Secretary. Lord Irvine of Lairg will become Lord Chancellor. Mr Blair would decide on the remaining posts after entering Downing Street on Friday.

Senior posts are certain in the event of a Blair victory for Margaret Beckett, whom the leadership reckons to have had a good campaign, and Donald Dewar, currently the Chief Whip.

Recent speculation that Ms Short, who is likely to become Overseas Development Secretary, a new Cabinet post promised in the manifesto, would be an immediate casualty in Mr Blair's first appointments is understood to be wide of the mark.

She has often been in hot water with Labour leaders.

and in recent times caused Mr Blair embarrassment over her call for the legalisation of cannabis, an attack on his spin doctors as "forces of darkness" and a row with her then deputy, Brian Wilson, over rail privatisation when she was Shadow Transport Secretary.

Ms Short is popular in the party and with the public. The affection has grown since it became known at the end of last year that she had been reunited with the son she gave up for adoption 31 years earlier.

A number of the 19 elected shadow cabinet members will not get a place in the Cabinet, which would be required if Mr Blair were to follow parliamentary Labour party rules to

the letter. That is because there are more people entitled to Cabinet posts than there are places available.

Apart from the 19 elected shadow cabinet figures, Mr Blair needs two Cabinet slots in the Lords for the Lord Chancellor and Leader of the Lords; he and Mr Prescott take the figure up to 23. In addition Andrew Smith, the transport spokesman, and Alistair Darling, the Shadow Chief Secretary, are not elected shadow cabinet members although they are in would-be Cabinet posts. Derek Foster, the Shadow Public Service Minister, was promised a Cabinet job when he gave up being Chief Whip. So Mr Blair has 26 names for the 22 paid posts he is allowed by law.



Mandelson in car escape

Peter Mandelson, Labour's campaign co-ordinator, had a narrow escape yesterday when a lorry broke an axle and lost two wheels on the A19 in Teesside. One wheel struck the roof of Mr Mandelson's car. Mr Mandelson was shaken but unhurt.

Jail for mother who wanted son locked up

By JOANNA BAILE

THE mother of a boy thief has been jailed for refusing to pay his court costs. She was protesting at a refusal by magistrates to lock up her son.

The 14-year-old, who has been in constant trouble with police, was placed under a 12-month supervision order for stealing a CD player and a basketball. His 37-year-old mother, who cannot be named for legal reasons, had warned social services in dozens of meetings over 18 months that her son would not respond to "soft" treatment and needed to be detained. She is serving a seven-day sentence for not paying his £40 costs. Family and

friends are organising a petition to have her freed.

The woman said yesterday from Eastwood Park Prison, Wiltshire: "I am just disgusted with the legal system. Me being in here is wasting taxpayers' money. All the magistrates had to do was help my son by locking him up."

Her brother said: "This is absolutely outrageous. While he roams the streets causing trouble, my sister — who has never even had a parking ticket — is now behind bars. He has absolutely no respect for his mother. He just doesn't care."

The boy's 50-year-old stepfather said: "She has done everything to

support him. She must have had 50 meetings with social services. He got in with the wrong crowd and started smoking cannabis."

"He stole her video and sold it for £6. He stole my binoculars, which are worth £100, and sold them just for £6 worth of cannabis... when he gets caught he is just cautioned because he is 14."

When the boy admitted the thefts from a school and a house in Corsham, Wiltshire, his mother wrote to North Wiltshire Youth Court, asking that he be sent to a secure unit.

When they refused, she wrote back: "I cannot accept that I should have to pay any charges when the judicial

system has let down myself and society in general. I see that only a sharp shock could now save him from a life of delinquency."

A spokeswoman for Wiltshire County Council, whose social services are helping the boy, said: "It is the courts that decide on sentences. There are strict guidelines as to when young people can be put into secure accommodation and his offences don't fit those criteria."

"Social services' view is that children who are locked up with far worse offenders can suffer more from being locked up with them than if they are not. He is currently with experienced foster carers."

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Judge seeks end to right of anonymity for office 'sneaks'

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A PROMINENT privatised utility which sacked a manager for gross misconduct, but refused to tell him what the allegation was, was yesterday told by a judge that it was wrong.

Sir Richard Scott, the Vice Chancellor, ordered the company to disclose the name of the third party to the sacked manager, who might then be able to sue for wrongful dismissal or libel to clear his name.

Legal experts say the ruling constitutes an advance in employment law which could ensure "office sneaks" in such cases are brought into the open. It also reinforces the right of employees to know the nature of any case made against them so that they can properly contest it.

Sir Richard ordered that the names of none of the parties in the case should be published, to protect future legislation which could be before a jury. In a forthright ruling, the judge said he was ordering disclosure of the name of the informant "to enable justice to be done".

He said "circumstances demand" that the 54-year-old manager, who was sacked from his £40,000-a-year job, should be given a day to clear his name, otherwise his future employment prospects would be ruined.

"It is intolerable that a

person in his position should be stigmatised by serious allegations of which he has no means of discovering their content unless by the assistance of an order of disclosure such as he seeks from me."

The manager is bringing a High Court action alleging wrongful dismissal. Sir Richard said it was "grossly unfair" that an employee should be dismissed for gross misconduct without being given any opportunity to meet the serious allegations against him.

"As an example of employment practice it seems to me outrageous," he said.

Winold Pawlak, for the company, was given 14 days' suspension of the order pending a possible appeal. The company was also ordered to pay the costs of the hearing.



Scott said hearing was "no more than a farce"

Mr Pawlak told the judge the company was withdrawing its admission that the manager had been wrongfully dismissed. He was employed by the company for four years, tendering for outside contracts when he was told by the managing director in May last year that serious allegations had been made against him by an outside party.

Patrick Elias, QC, his counsel, said the manager was sacked after a disciplinary hearing and his appeal was rejected.

"At all these hearings he asked what was the nature of the complaint against him but the company said, 'We are not telling you'."

The manager has received no money, has lost his company car, pension rights and private medical care for his family. "He is simply not able to get further employment in this field because of the nature of his dismissal," Mr Elias said.

Mr Pawlak said an industrial tribunal had ordered the manager's reinstatement, but the company had refused.

The managing director of the company had said it was not willing to disclose the allegations because this would identify the informant. But the judge said the failure to disclose the information made the disciplinary hearing "no more than a farce".

Officer's widow tells of terror

By NICHOLAS WATT

THE widow of the last prison officer to be murdered by loyalists yesterday told how families suffered relentless intimidation from terrorists.

Sandra Peacock said that her children had endured years of verbal abuse. Her windows were regularly smashed before the Ulster Volunteer Force finally shot dead her husband, Jim, at their Belfast home in 1993.

Mrs Peacock, 51, said her heart went out to the wives and children of prison officers who were now living in fear after the Ulster Freedom Fighters warned that a "price would be paid" if riot squads broke up the protest at the Maze jail.

Although the Northern Ireland Prison Service insisted that it would not use force, the UFF statement served as a reminder that prison officers are facing the most serious threat since the end of the ceasefire.

Prison officers and their families are particularly vulnerable to intimidation from loyalists because they often live in areas which are under the sway of the terrorists.

Mrs Peacock said: "It is so easy to target a family when the husband is out to work because the terrorists know exactly where you live. We suffered 20 years of intimidation and the house was even attacked when I was pregnant. They would usually wait until Jim had gone to work and they would put the windows in, beat up the children and shout abuse."



Sandra Peacock's husband was shot dead in 1993

husbands are out at work and many of the women will have to sit up all night to protect their children."

In September 1993 a gunman fired a single bullet at Jim Peacock, 44, as he prepared a hot drink for his wife. The terrorists struck after a protest at the Maze by UFF inmates which had similarities with the latest protest by prisoners from the Ulster Defence Association. Mr Peacock was the 30th prison officer to be murdered by terrorists during the Troubles.

H-blocks protest spreads as talks fail to end crisis

By NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

CRISIS talks between loyalist politicians and senior government officials in Belfast failed to end the second night of protests by terrorist inmates at the Maze prison yesterday.

Masked inmates from the Ulster Defence Association, including notorious terrorists, remained in control of two H-blocks as the protest spread to other loyalist wings at the high-security jail.

The protest intensified after leaders of the Ulster Democratic Party, the political wing of the UDA, failed to reach agreement during an hour of talks at Stormont Castle with John Steele, the director of security at the Northern Ireland Office. In a tense meeting, the UDF told Mr Steele that loyalist prisoners were furious after conditions were tightened at the Maze in the wake of the IRA's escape attempt last month.

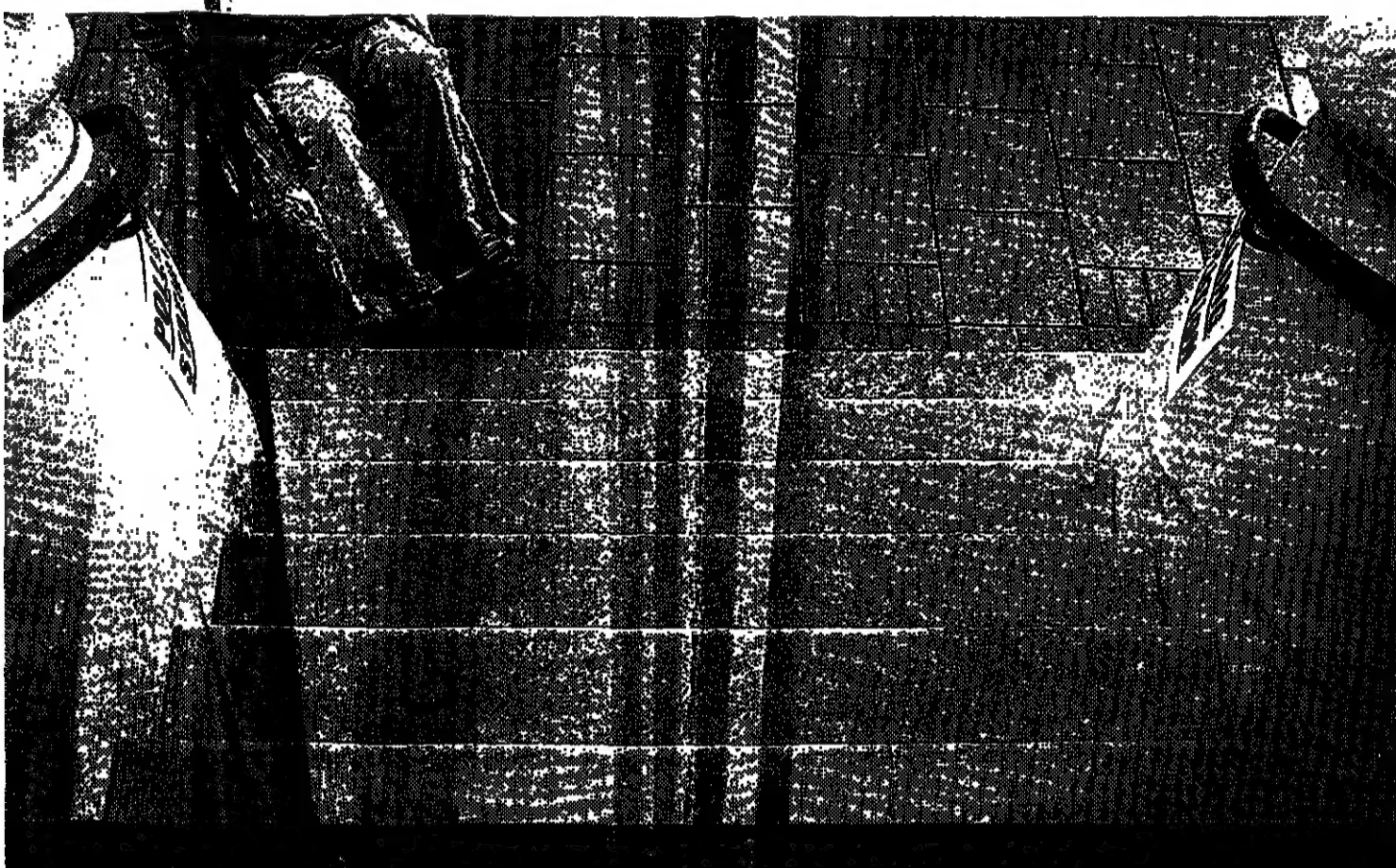
John White, the UDF's prisons spokesman, said that it was unfair to penalise loyalists. Speaking after the talks last night, Mr White said that he had found little common ground with the Northern Ireland Office officials. Mr White, who is to return to Stormont for further talks today, said: "Until an agreement is made between the prison administration and the prisoners, unfortunately the demonstration will continue. But there is still a hope that tomorrow we may get

some answers to the questions we put."

Up to 150 UDA prisoners on H-blocks 1 and 2 took to the roofs of their wings and set fire to observation towers on Tuesday to protest against the tightening of conditions at the prison. They were angry that the inquiry into the IRA escape attempt recommended that both republican and loyalist prisoners be locked up briefly twice a day to allow prison officers to make a head-count and to inspect cells. Movement between H-blocks was also restricted. Republican prisoners co-operated with the new regime.

Sir Patrick Mayhew, the outgoing Northern Ireland Secretary, defended the new security measures. He said: "The measures are not a punishment. They are simply the very minimum that the public can expect to ensure the safety of staff and prisoners in what is a top-security prison." Sir Patrick condemned the Ulster Freedom Fighters, the cover name for the UDA, for threatening prison officers. In a statement issued on Wednesday night, the UFF said that a "price would be paid" if the authorities broke up the protest by force.

The talks at Stormont appeared to raise questions about the Government's apparent insistence that it will only talk to parties that are committed to peace.



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Asylum judges agree that France is 'safe'

The Home Secretary won High Court backing yesterday over a decision to return a Turkish asylum seeker to France. In a ruling with implications for hundreds of similar cases, judges upheld as lawful Michael Howard's policy of stemming a stream of would-be refugees across the Channel, on the ground that France was a "safe country" for them to apply for asylum.

Lawyers for Gulay Canbolat, 24, had argued that, in some cases, the French authorities did not properly consider asylum claims and that she would be in danger of being returned to Turkey, where she feared persecution. But Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, and two other appeal judges, refused a judicial review. Mrs Canbolat travelled to Britain last August by Eurostar. Because of the lapse of time, an immigration officer's decision to send her back has been put on hold while her application is determined on merit.

Visitor numbers up

Most of the top ten tourist attractions reported an increase in visitors last year. Overall the number of visitors increased by 3 per cent with industrial heritage sites such as old factories, farms and steam railways all recording well over the average increase. The top ten were: Blackpool Pleasure Beach (7.5 million visitors); British Museum (6.2m); National Gallery (5m); Palace Pier, Brighton (4.25m); Alton Towers (2.75m); Madame Tussauds (2.7m); Tower of London (2.5m); Westminster Abbey (2.5m); Eastbourne Pier (2.3m); York Minster (2.2m). *Travel News, pages 42, 43*

Acne drug death verdict

A 17-year-old girl died from a drug prescribed for her acne, a coroner said. Christina Robinson, of Great Yarmouth, suffered a blood clot on the lung after taking Dianette for six weeks. She became ill at home on January 30 and was taken to the town's James Paget Hospital after recovering consciousness. She collapsed again at the hospital, failed to recover consciousness and was pronounced dead three hours later. The Great Yarmouth inquest was told that she had collapsed five days earlier. The coroner, Keith Dowding, recorded a verdict of accidental death.

Farmer fined £9,000

Aubrey Hancock, 62, a beef farmer from Alford, Lincolnshire, has been fined £9,000 and ordered to pay £25,000 costs at Lincoln Crown Court for giving false information to support a claim that his cattle had never been exposed to BSE. He admitted three charges of providing a false trade description of goods. He had certified that 111 cattle from his herd had been born and lived all their lives on Holme Farm when they had in fact been kept on two other plots of land as well. It is thought to be the first successful prosecution of its kind instigated by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Big Ben takes a break

Big Ben stopped yesterday, the eve of election day. The bells and clock hands, high in their eyrie above the Palace of Westminster, were stilled for 45 minutes. Engineers first noticed that the clock had stopped at 12.12pm. They climbed the 334 steps from ground to mechanism, to discover that an escapement bearing had mysteriously tightened itself, bringing the 138-year-old works to a standstill. Some fast work by the maintenance men had the clock going again by 12.54, in good time for its one o'clock chimes.

Election 97, pages 9-12, 14, 15

Blair heading for Downing St

Continued from page 1

to hold his party together. Or a better future with new Labour — a party whose priorities are education and rebuilding the NHS.

In his final speech in his constituency Mr Blair said there were only 24 hours to save Britain from a fifth Tory term. "Twenty-four hours to save our national health service. Twenty-four hours to give our children the education they need in our schools. Twenty-four hours to give hope to our young people and

security to our elderly. Twenty-four hours to build that great decent British society."

Paddy Ashdown was in buoyant form as his party strategists predicted that he was close to a breakthrough. There were growing hopes that the Liberal Democrats could win more than 30 seats today.

MORI interviewed 2,304 adults at 253 sampling points across Britain on Tuesday. Voting intentions figures exclude those who say they would not vote (6 per cent),

were undecided (6 per cent) or who refused to name a party (5 per cent). A recall survey was conducted yesterday by telephone among those who had not disclosed a voting intention either because they refused to say, were undecided, or although giving their voting intention, said they might change their mind.

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Birds provide a 'stimulating' welcome as creatures who must not be bo. return to London zoo



It's behind you: the unwitting peacock wanders the improved enclosure, seemingly unaware that it has company. The bear reaches out to grab the feathers but, seconds later, the bird managed to escape

By NICK NUTTALL
ENVIRONMENT
CORRESPONDENT

Peacock is one of the bear necessities

THE peacock was looking pretty proud. It was in a newly revamped enclosure at London Zoo. Unfortunately, it did not know that the improvements were to make sure that newly arriving bears could have a "stimulating" environment, shared with other creatures. Like peacocks, for example.

This was the moment when the bird met one of its new live-in companions, a sloth bear that was not feeling too

slothful yesterday. It ambled up and grabbed the peacock's feathers. The bird escaped, but looked as though it had shared quite enough stimulation for one day.

The zoo was welcoming back the presence of bears for the first time in 12 years. To counter past criticisms that old-style zoos kept animals in poor conditions, the zoo's well-being, its two rare sloth

bears on the redesigned Mappin Terraces have ropes, trees and toys to entertain them, and they are sharing their new home with muntjac deer, monkeys and peacocks. Escape routes and fences allow the deer and langurs to escape to their own enclosures if the bears get bad-tempered. A spokeswoman for the zoo said the peacocks were unlikely to be in real danger,

although the bears can reach 30mph in a short sprint. "Yes, they can be occasionally carnivorous and are, contrary to their name, quite quick. But not quick enough to get the birds — they get out of the way."

The terraces were closed in 1985 because of growing disquiet that the existing design was unsuitable. Nothing has been kept on the 2,300 square

metre, concrete structure since. Jo Gipps, director of the zoo, said it had always hoped to bring bears back. "We are now satisfied that we can keep these highly intelligent animals in the right conditions to meet all their welfare needs."

Keepers will put mealy worms, similar to the bears' natural diet of termites, in specially drilled logs, allowing them to claw or suck out

their food as they do in the wild. Doug Richardson, assistant curator of mammals, said: "They have obstacles and they adore plastic toys, including a traffic cone."

The decision to refurbish the terraces, at a cost of £160,000, is part of the zoo's programme to raise visitor numbers and be financially sound while maintaining its research into captive breeding

and zoological sciences. Mr Richardson said: "In the past, when bears have been suggested for a return to the zoo, the usual criticism has been that bears cannot be kept humanely in captivity. Zoo bears are often kept in enclosures that do not cater for their physical needs, let alone their mental requirements."

A lower pool, near the café terrace, is being made avail-

able for the bears to play on hot days. The two 12-year-olds, with white muzzles, have come from Warsaw zoo in Poland, and are the only sloth bears in Britain. The population in the wild is estimated at 400 in Sri Lanka and about 1,000 in India. It is hoped to use the two newcomers in a European captive breeding programme co-ordinated by Amsterdam zoo. Sloth bears can live to be 30.

The enclosure has been renamed Bear Mountain, following a suggestion by the zoo's children's committee. The bears are yet to be named.

Victim identified killers with squeeze of a hand

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

TWO killers were jailed yesterday after their victim identified them from his deathbed by a silent squeeze of his father's hand.

Mark Craig, 23, was doused in petrol and set alight at his home in Dumbarton, in September. He suffered fatal burns to his head, face, shoulders and arms and died ten days later from blood poisoning. But before he died in Glasgow Royal Infirmary informed his father Gordon, 51, who the attackers were. To the names Thomas Clancy and Edward Frize he responded with a confirming squeeze.

Clancy was the common-

law husband of Mark Craig's sister, Wendy. The couple have four children.

Yesterday Clancy, 32, from Dumbarton, was jailed for life at the High Court in Edinburgh. Lord Morison, the judge, recommended that he serve at least 15 years. Frize, 22, also of Dumbarton, who was earlier convicted of the reduced charge of culpable homicide, was sentenced to nine years.

At the six-day trial in early April both men had denied murdering Mr Craig and blamed each other for the fatal attack. The court was told that Clancy sprayed petrol over Mr Craig from a plastic bottle and set him on fire. The two

killers claimed they only meant to give him a scare. Frize, described in court as a fool who was easily led, claimed that Clancy had frightened him into going to the victim's home.

It emerged that the two men had earlier been in a fight with Mr Craig and another man, Stuart Docherty, 25, at a local social security office. They went to Mr Craig's home at 5am.

Mr Docherty testified that the pair had suddenly appeared in front of him and Mr Craig in the living room of the house. He said Clancy pulled out the bottle from a plastic bag and ordered Mr Craig to apologise over the fight.

Surgeon defends transplant refusal

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

A DOCTOR rejected a claim yesterday that a dying 15-year-old drug-user had been denied a liver transplant on moral grounds.

Dr Hilary Sanfey, 45, a surgeon with Edinburgh Royal Infirmary's liver transplant team in 1995, told an inquiry into Michelle Paul's death that the decision to reject the girl for a transplant was made on medical grounds. Michelle, from Aberdeen, had taken an Ecstasy tablet at a rave and suffered liver failure.

Dr Sanfey, who now works at the University of Virginia, in the United States, said that it would have been totally wrong to make such a decision on moral grounds.

"All we can do is make the best possible judgment. At that time she had irreversible brain damage and would not have been suitable for transplant," she told the fatal accident inquiry at Aberdeen Sheriff Court.

Carolann Paul, Michelle's mother, and Margaret Pirie, her grandmother, had previously told the hearing that the decision had been a moral one based on Michelle's use of soft drugs and a family history of drug abuse. Her mother is a former drug addict.

Dr Sanfey said she could not understand why the fam-

ily had been given the impression that the decision not to treat Michelle had been made on moral grounds. She insisted that it had been for medical reasons and that carrying out the £60,000 operation was a long process. It could take up to ten hours to harvest the liver and a further eight hours to carry out the transplant.

"Both sides are right in this inquiry. We had to make a decision about what was right for Michelle, but also for the other people on the list. The family is never going to understand that their daughter is less important than someone else on the list," she said.

The hearing before Sheriff Graeme Warner continues.



Dr Sanfey made refusal on medical grounds

Schoolgirls in funfair killing freed after a year

By RICHARD FORD

TWO teenage girls jailed a year ago for killing a 13-year-old schoolgirl in a fight have been freed.

The girls, convicted of killing Louise Allen, were released under supervision from local authority secure accommodation in the East Midlands on Tuesday, a day earlier than planned. Staff made the decision to allow the girls to leave unnotified.

Louise was killed in the head during a fairground fight in Corby, Northamptonshire. The girls, aged 13 and 14, were sentenced to two years' detention after being convicted of manslaughter. An appeal by Sir Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney-General, to increase their sentences was turned down in February.

They were released on the grounds that they would get 12 months off their sentence for good behaviour and had already spent seven months in custody before their trial. They will remain under the supervision of social services staff.

Louise's mother said the timing of the release, a day before the anniversary of the killing last year, was a "slap in the face".

Lighter shade of parking ban

SMALL towns and villages in England and Wales have won the right to replace bright yellow no-parking lines with a gentle shade of primrose (Tim Jones writes). The Department of Transport decision allows local authorities to introduce the more soothing shade to environmentally sensitive areas.

Instead of the 4in-wide canary-yellow double lines, the delicate primrose replacements will be a more discreet 2in. In Hampshire, the county

council has already allowed Fareham, Alresford, parts of Winchester and some villages to opt for primrose.

Arnold Browne, Fareham council's engineering officer, said the new lines were designed to be less obtrusive. The bright yellow ones would be replaced only when they had worn out or been so eroded that people confused them for broken lines which would allow parking. "They are not been replaced just for the sake of appearance. If a

line is not damaged, the new lines will only be painted on when the road is resurfaced."

Nick Light, a Hampshire County Council spokesman, said that Portsmouth and Southampton, because they were relatively large cities, had decided not to make the change. "Primrose lines might confuse tourists and strangers passing through."

The Council for the Protection of Rural England said that the initiative constituted a minor improvement.

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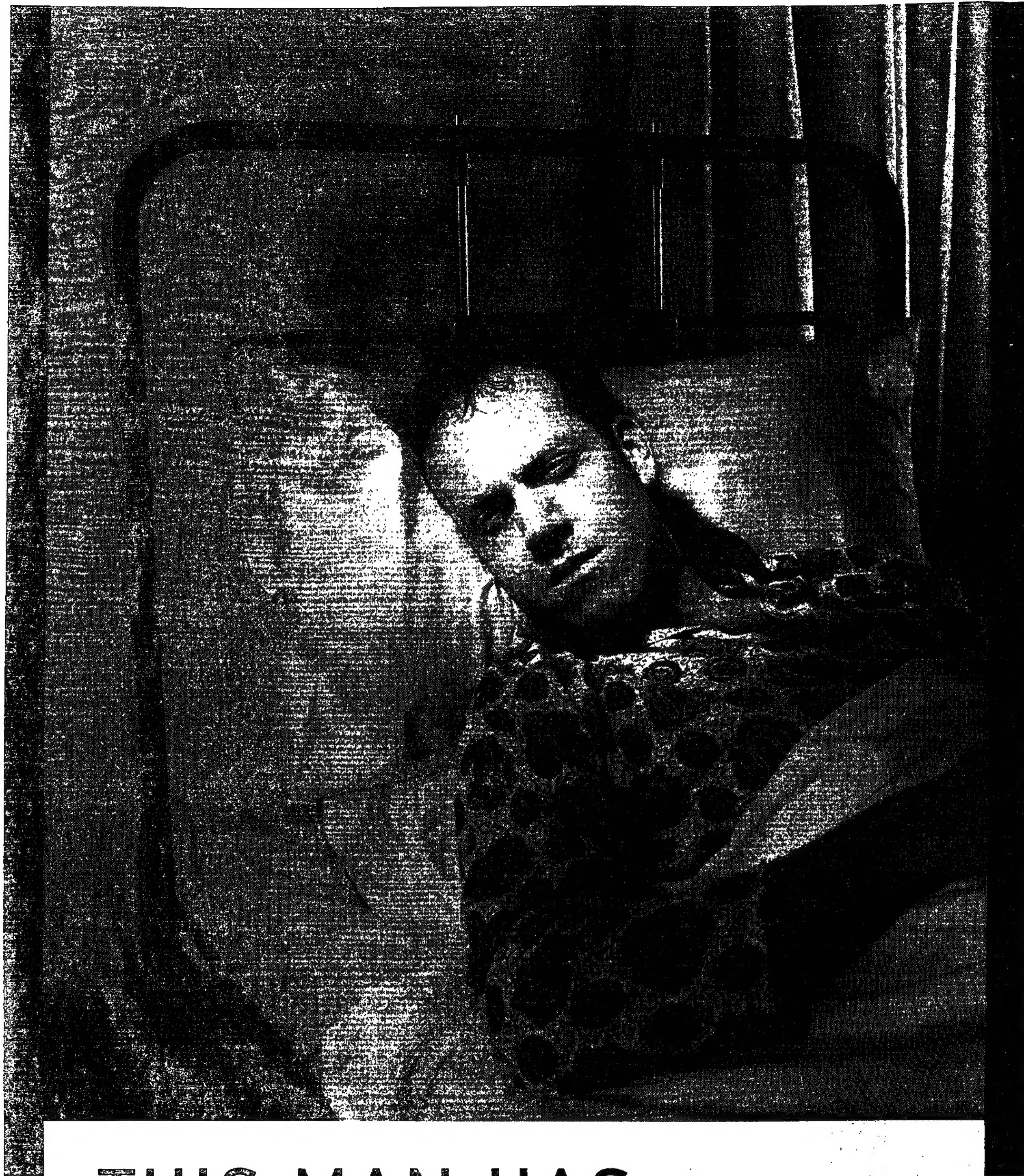
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Companion betrayed trust of a grand old lady

Carer faces jail for systematic theft

By EMMA WILKINS

A FORMER ballerina lived a long and glorious life, founding a school, teaching the children of the powerful and earning the nickname Breezy. But the last years of Margery de Brissac Bernard's life were spent with a care assistant who systematically plundered her life savings.

At the age of 94, the retired headmistress was suffering from failing eyesight and sold her cottage to share the home of her trusted companion, Rosina McCamley. Over two years, McCamley stole £33,820 and, when her employer died, she forged documents showing that the money had been donated to charity.

She might have got away with it, but for the suspicions of a solicitor and Miss de Brissac Bernard's brother, Dudley, who made a dying wish for the "carer" to be investigated. Yesterday McCamley, 55, was facing a jail sentence after being found guilty of theft and forgery by Maidstone Crown Court.

Remanding her in custody for sentencing, Judge Anthony Balston said that she was

guilty of one of the meanest offences to come before his court. "A sentence of imprisonment is inevitable and I see no reason why it should not start now. This offence was committed in circumstances where there was a grave breach of trust. The temptation for her to abscond is considerable."

Miss de Brissac Bernard trained as a ballet dancer before working for the Admiralty during the First World War, and was once invited to tour with the Royal Ballet. She turned down many offers of marriage, staying faithful to the memory of a naval officer who went down with his ship in the war. She kept his picture at her bedside.

In 1950, she founded the Garden House Preparatory School in Chelsea and taught the children of Lord Home of the Hirsel, the former Conservative Prime Minister, and the grandchildren of Sir Winston Churchill. She had a wicked sense of humour. Once, on the London Underground, she saw the father of a Garden House pupil. Turning innocently to her travelling com-



The headmistress known for her sense of humour

panion, she boomed across the full carriage: "There goes the father of one of my children."

She became ill in 1992. McCamley, who was employed through an agency, befriended her and, by 1993, Miss de Brissac Bernard had sold her cottage in Frant, near Tunbridge Wells, to move into McCamley's home at Marden, Kent.

Miss de Brissac Bernard died in 1994 after a stroke. McCamley tried to account for the missing money by forging a pre-dated letter purporting to be from her employer,

giving instructions to transfer sums to charities in anonymous donations. McCamley sent the letter to Miss de Brissac Bernard's London solicitor, Michael White.

Robert Ward, for the prosecution, told the court: "It gave him considerable concern. He knew Miss de Brissac Bernard gave to charity but that was done through standing orders every month."

Mr White, who called in the police, discovered that over 15 months McCamley had been "paid" £40,000, about £22,000 more than an average carer's wage. Bank statements revealed further withdrawals of £9,820 and two cheques for £1,000 each which McCamley was alleged to have used as a deposit on a car.

After the hearing, Miss de Brissac Bernard's great-nephew, Anthony Prior, said: "I have fulfilled my grandfather's dying wish. He was very close to his sister Margery, and he knew something was not right. On his deathbed he told me to find out what went wrong. For three years, the family has been fighting to prove that this woman betrayed her trust."



Rosina McCamley: tried forgery to cover up thefts

PC stole £7,800 life savings from pensioner

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

A DEBT-RIDDEN policeman who stole the £7,800 life savings of a disabled pensioner he had befriended was sentenced to 18 months in prison yesterday.

PC Trevor Standing, 36, wept as Judge Rivlin told him he was a mean, opportunist thief who had committed a grave breach of trust.

He stumbled upon 79-year-old Margaret Lyons's savings in a pot in the lounge of her home and had taken it all, hiding it in bundles in his loft, one of them labelled "holiday money". Miss Lyons had been saving her Civil Service pension for five years to buy her disabled 92-year-old brother a motorised invalid car. Southwark Crown Court was told.

John Traversi, for the prosecution, said Standing, a police officer for six years, had befriended Miss Lyons after being called to her maisonette in Thornton Heath, south London, four years ago. The two became friends and he would do her odd jobs.

Standing had found her secret board while trying to repair her television. He had tripped on the carpet and knocked the pot from the table, revealing bundles of notes in a plastic bag. After taking the money to hide in the loft of his home in Croydon, the constable bought Miss Lyons a second-hand television and pretended it was a gift from him.

Miss Lyons discovered the theft two days later when she went to get a small amount to repay a loan. "She was worried that no one would believe her because of her age and because she was saying that a policeman was responsible," Mr Traversi said.

Standing denied the offence but then confessed after officers found the bundles of notes in his attic. He told detectives that he had run up large credit

card debts. Mukul Chawla, in mitigation, said Standing had a distinguished military career before joining the police and had twice been commended. He was seen by his superior officers as being "dedicated, enthusiastic and providing a positive image to the public". He "was at a loss to explain his actions".

The judge accepted that, when he committed the offence, Standing was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, which had developed after being first on the scene when a son had murdered his mother and then fatally stabbed himself.

As he grappled with the man, the officer's hands sunk into the deep wounds on his wrist. His later efforts to resuscitate him failed.

Judge Rivlin said that, although £5,770 of Miss Lyons's money had been recovered, he accepted Standing could not afford to repay it all. However, if a further £600 was not handed over within 14 days, he would have to serve a further month in prison.

Miss Lyons said that Standing deserved what punishment he was given and hoped he would be pursued by bad luck. "I don't ever want to see him again in my life."



Standing: he hid the cash in bundles in his loft

Lecturer seeks cash for 'mental trauma'

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A LECTURER investigated for writing the words "sexist pig" on a student's essay yesterday began a compensation claim against her college for mental trauma.

Valerie Goulden, a former media studies tutor at Halesowen College in Walsley, Cheshire, claims she suffered stress during the inquiry which led her to take voluntary redundancy. Ms Goulden was cleared by the college after it was claimed that she tried to indoctrinate students. She told an industrial tribunal in Liverpool yesterday that the affair had damaged her professional integrity and employment prospects.

Arguing for compensation at a tribunal yesterday, she said: "I expected my symptoms to disappear when I left and for a while I felt miraculously happy. But soon I became reluctant to go out of the house and I started to suffer from flashbacks. I've started taking anti-depressants and have been referred to a psychiatrist. I am always frightened and have panic attacks."

insufficient evidence to substantiate the allegations.

During the investigation, another student, Ben Weston, disclosed that Ms Goulden had handed back one of his essays with the words "sexist pig" written on it. Mr Jenkins said there would be no disciplinary action but he placed Mrs Goulden under monitoring for a full academic year.

Ms Goulden won a sex discrimination case at a tribunal in Liverpool in 1995, after claiming that the monitoring programme had damaged her professional integrity and employment prospects.

The hearing continues.

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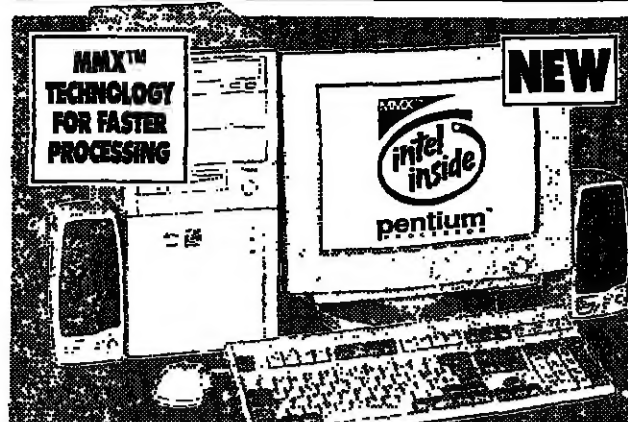
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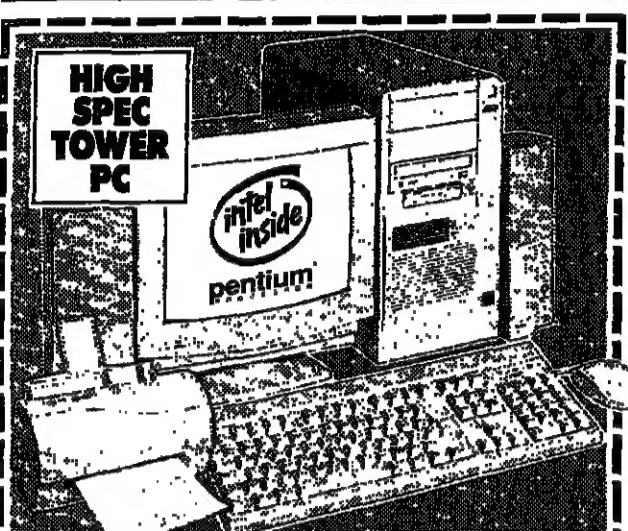
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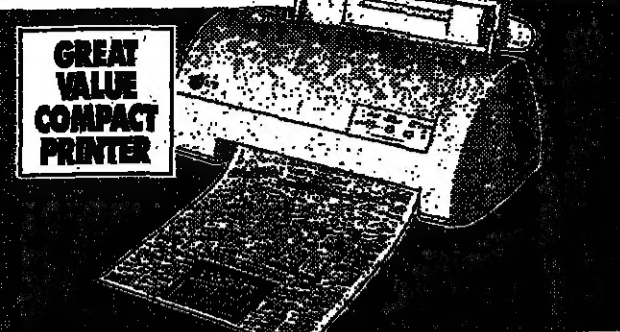
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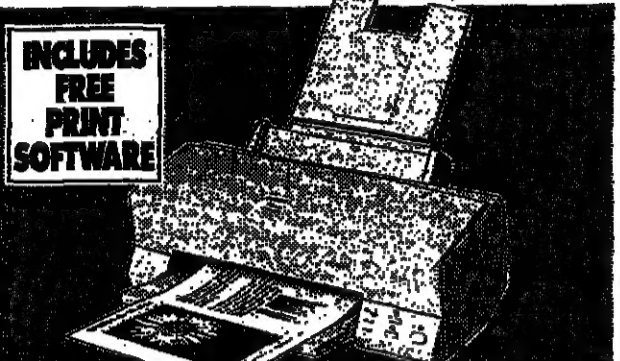
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Father of two dies in Colorado

Speeding skier who hit Briton charged with manslaughter

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

A SKIER was charged with manslaughter after he lost control on the slopes and collided with a British beginner, who died of head injuries.

Nathan Hall, 18, a ski lift operator, was skiing dangerously fast on the slopes at Vail, Colorado, witnesses said. He crashed into Alan Cobb, 33, originally from Ipswich.

Mr Cobb was on his fourth day of skiing and had taken to the sport with enthusiasm. He was negotiating a blue [easy] run with his fiancée, Christa Neville, when the accident happened. His skull was fractured and he lost consciousness immediately. He was treated by emergency medical orderlies, but died at the scene.

"The collision was enough to kill him fairly quickly," said Donna Barnes, the coroner. She said it was possible that Mr Cobb's head had been struck by a loosened ski.

After the collision on April 20, Mr Hall, who suffered minor injuries, was given a routine test for drugs and alcohol. Mr Cobb, who had two daughters and worked as a cabinet maker, moved to Denver, Colorado, eight

months ago from Texas, where he had lived for a number of years.

Mr Hall, an experienced skier who had won several local races, was released on \$15,000 (£9,200) bail after being charged with manslaughter. Colorado has a law designed to prevent fatal skiing accidents.

The state's 1979 Skier Safety Act stipulates that "each skier has the duty to maintain control of his speed and course at all times when skiing and to maintain a proper lookout so as to be able to avoid other skiers and objects".

If convicted, Mr Hall faces two to 10 years in prison and a maximum fine of \$500,000. His lawyer, Brett Hackman, said that the crash was a terrible accident.

"You have a situation where, generally speaking, people ski at different rates of speed without criminal culpability," he said. "Where you draw the line between skiing in the way that you ski and skiing in such a way as to raise issues of criminal conduct is obviously a difficult issue."

The collision happened at 4.30pm, an hour when many people are making a last, fast dash down the slopes. The easier slopes can be dangerous places to be at that time of day, with experienced skiers weaving at high speed around slower skiers. The accident happened on Vail's lower Riva Ridge, one of the resort's best-known runs.

At the time of the accident visibility was good. Witnesses said that Mr Hall was simply skiing too fast, and apparently without care for other skiers in his path.

Dangerous skiing and ski-boarding is an increasing problem for ski resorts. Vail, like many other resorts, publicises a safety and responsibility code and attempts to prevent the headstrong and insufficiently skilled from creating chaos on the pistes. The onus is normally on the skier higher up the hill to look out for those below. At the time of the accident Mr Hall was coming from above.

Fourteen people have died this winter on Colorado's pistes, nine of them in collisions with trees, the others from heart attacks.



Nelson Mandela and the Duchess: he rescheduled cabinet talks to meet her

Duchess in Unicef talks with Mandela

BY A STAFF REPORTER

THE Duchess of Kent walked arm-in-arm with President Mandela yesterday, after they arranged a meeting at short notice during her seven-day tour of South Africa.

The Duchess, 64, undertaking the trip on behalf of children's charity Unicef, spent 15 minutes with the President and the Health Minister, Nkosisana Zuma, in Pretoria.

Mr Mandela, who had hastily rescheduled a cabinet meeting, presented the Duchess with a traditional painting. In return, she donated a personal cheque to his charity, The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund.

The two, who met last year when he visited Britain, then spoke of the work of Unicef in South Africa, and she thanked him for his strong support. The Duchess is on her first main official engagement since the disclosure five months ago that she was suffering from ME. As patron of Unicef's UK committee she is to visit Hladol-anang in Northern Province; Johannesburg; Olivershoek in Kwazulu-Natal; and Cape Town.

It comes just five months after she was forced to cancel all official engagements because of the onset of ME.

Rise in fur seal numbers threatens Antarctic

BY NICK NUTTALL

BOOMING seal populations in Antarctica are threatening some of the world's most unspoilt islands and lakes, scientists said yesterday. Studies indicate that numbers of fur seals in the region are now higher than at any time during the past 6,500 years.

The populations, which have risen sharply since the decline of seal-hunting at the turn of the century, are being linked to a collapse in whale populations in the Southern Ocean. Baleen whales, such as the blue whale, feed on a shrimp-like animal called krill, as do fur seals.

But there are fewer than 10 per cent of the whales left in the region — a legacy of the whaling industry which, since 1922, slaughtered most species to the brink of extinction. Dominic Hodgson, of the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge, said fur seal populations were expanding because they now had "almost unfettered access to an unlimited food resource".

Dr Hodgson said there was evidence of serious damage occurring on some islands and on the western Antarctic peninsula. "This large increase has caused extensive destruction of vegetation, soil erosion and the eutrophication of freshwater lakes on coastlines where the seals haul out."

The research, published in *Nature*, is aimed at trying to discover whether the numbers of fur seals in the region are part of a natural cycle or are due to human interference. The researchers analysed lake sediment cores from Signy Island in South Orkney. The sediments contain seal hairs, which act as a record of seal populations over the past 6,500 years. The record shows that the numbers visiting the island from the main breeding beaches of South Georgia dropped during the years of commercial seal-hunting. But since 1977 the summer influx has risen sharply.

Darwin theory wins by a short leg

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

THE evolution of lizards on a group of tiny Caribbean islands has given Darwin's evolutionary theories a leg-up.

Fourteen years after lizards were introduced to the islands, they were found to have adapted to local conditions in the ways that natural selection would have predicted. Hind legs had become shorter so that they could perch successfully on the islands' thinner plant stems and branches. The more the vegetation differed from the island where the lizards originated, the shorter their legs became.

The study shows how quickly a species can adapt to circumstances. Critics of Darwinism often claim that few such examples have been documented.

In 1977 and 1981, members of the lizard species *Anolis sagrei*, were taken from the island of Stanley Cay — which has reasonably large trees — and transferred in groups of five or ten to 14 other uninhabited islands where there were no other lizards. Earlier studies by Jonathan Losos, of Washington University in St Louis, had shown that the size of lizards' hind limbs depended on the size of the branches they perched on. Those perching on narrow branches or twigs tended

to be small, with short hind limbs, but on bigger trees the creatures had longer limbs, making them swifter to escape predators.

The assumption was that the move would lead to an evolutionary trend to smaller limbs, and that is exactly what Dr Losos reports in this week's *Nature*. On the smallest islands, no lizards survived, but on the larger ones they flourished. One island had more than 700. This rate of evolution is hundreds or thousands of times faster than seen in the fossil record, but comparably rapid evolution has been seen in studies of fish moved from their habitat.

Mighty mouse misses gene

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

MICE with bulging muscles have been created by genetic engineering. The mighty mice, with muscles twice as big as usual, appear healthy and normal in other respects, says Alexandra McPherson, a PhD student at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

They were produced by "knocking out" a gene controlling muscle growth. Without the gene, the mice were unable

to make a substance called GDF8 — growth/differentiation factor 8.

The finding could lead to better treatments for some muscle diseases, and raises the possibility of livestock which would yield larger amounts of lean meat.

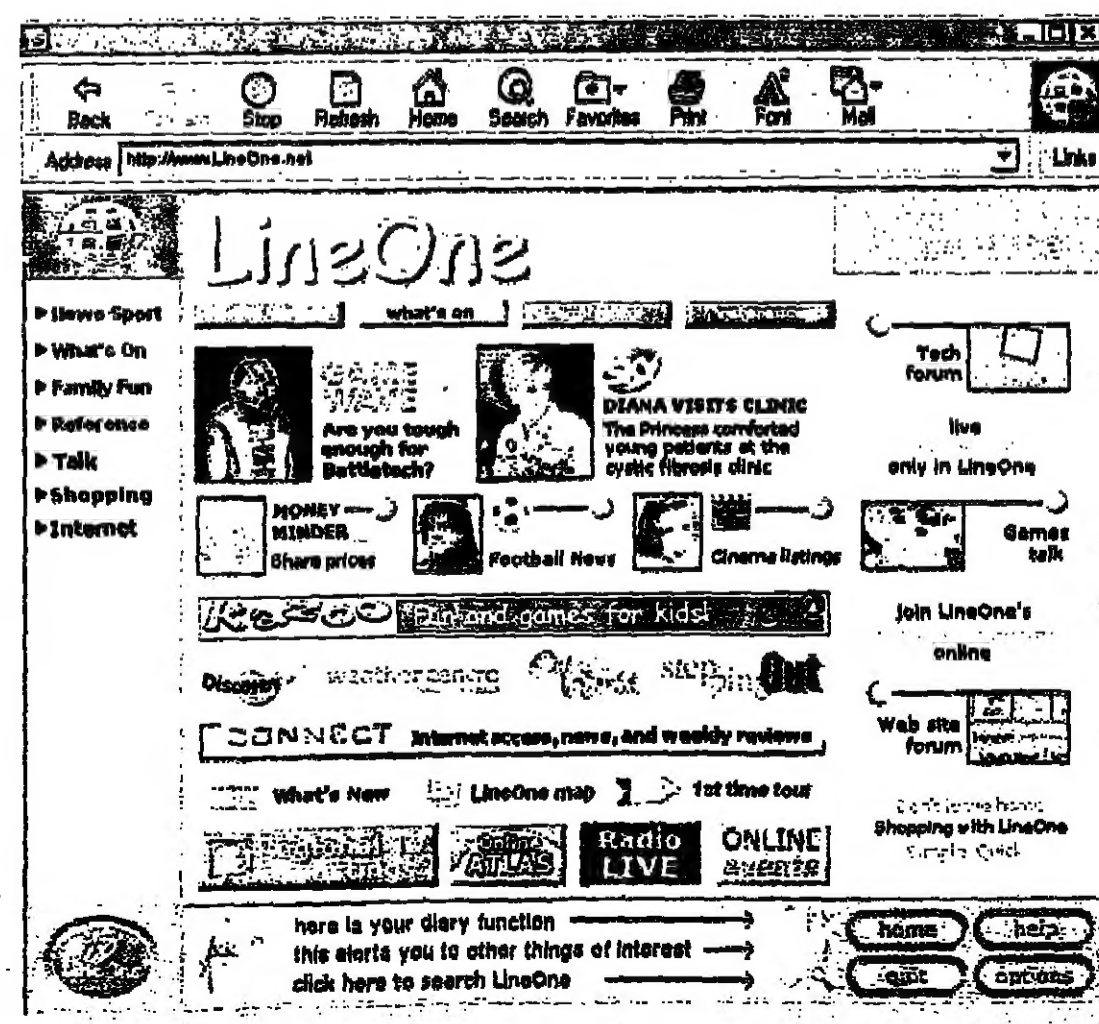
"We're excited that GDF8 could give us new opportunities to treat the many muscle wasting diseases like muscular dystrophy or cachexia, the muscle loss that accompanies some cancers and Aids," said

Se-Jin Lee, a co-author of the study published in *Nature*. "We've also found GDF8 in cows and chickens, so we might be able to interfere with it to create livestock with more meat and relatively less fat."

The engineered mice are now a year old and can produce healthy offspring. The rights to the discovery have been licensed to MetaMorphix Inc, established by Professor Lee to capitalise on discoveries made at the university.



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Safety charity calls for ban on mobile phones in cars

By KEVIN EASON, MOTORING EDITOR

THE Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents called yesterday for a ban on the use of mobile telephones in cars after two people died because drivers were making calls at the wheel.

Executives at the charity will press the Department of Transport and police to find ways to end the practice. This could include making it a criminal offence.

The society also wants employers to prevent workers from making calls in the car, even to the extent of fitting a locking system which would

stop carphones, including "hand-free" models, from working while the engine was running. The society says that a driver's reaction time can fall by half a second, and research shows that motorists are 30 per cent more likely to crash when on the phone.

Using a mobile phone at the wheel is not an offence and police must prove the driver was not in control of the vehicle while making a call.

Roger Vincent, of the society, said: "We are determined to outlaw the use of mobile telephones while motorists are

driving. It is a unnecessary and a dangerous distraction."

Two recent accidents have involved mobile phones. Peter Mill, a 35-year-old marketing executive, faces jail after being convicted of causing death by dangerous driving after being involved in a fatal crash while using his mobile phone, and a mother is planning a civil action against a man fined £250 for careless driving after the death of her daughter.

Dr Gerald Matthews, a reader in psychology at Dundee University, backed the society's call. He said

drivers under stress became more distracted when on the phone, particularly if the call was complex. Motorists were most vulnerable when they felt safest, such as on straight, wide roads — and that was the time when they might decide to make a call.

He said: "You cannot compare a telephone call with speaking to someone in the car. A passenger can sense when the driver needs to concentrate so that the distraction is not the same. A telephone call is not passive, but involves the driver, and inevitably that will have an effect."

But the AA said that a ban on mobile telephones in cars would be unenforceable and impractical. "We would not dispute that motorists must be told that they should not use a hand-held mobile telephone when on the move."

"But a hand-free telephone is a sensible option and is probably no more distracting than changing a station on the radio or lighting a cigarette."

Leading article, page 23



Roy Reynolds at work in his Louth studio, and his sketch of the face of the dead man washed up on a nearby beach



Artist fills in details for police

A ROYAL artist whose pedigree stretches back to the 18th-century portrait master Sir Joshua Reynolds is using his skills to help police to identify the body of a man washed up on the Lincolnshire coast. Police were unable to circulate photographs of the face because of decomposition. Instead, Roy Reynolds, 67 and the great-great-great-nephew of Sir Joshua, has reconstructed the face in a sketch. The body was discovered on April 7 on a

beach near Skegness. Detective Chief Inspector Paul Jones, of Lincolnshire Police, said Mr Reynolds's skills were a final attempt to identify the man, who is aged between 25 and 35. Mr Reynolds, from Louth, Lincolnshire, has worked before as an artist with police around the country and helped to solve at least one murder. He has also painted the Duke of Edinburgh and worked on commissions for the Queen.

£17m study into cancer links

AN URGENT programme of research into possible links between the use of mobile telephones and cancer is being launched after a study showing mice exposed to typical radiation from the phones were twice as likely to get the disease (see Murray writes).

The £17 million programme, drawn up by European Union experts headed

by Alistair McKinlay, of the National Radiological Protection Board, will look at the interaction between radio telephones and living tissue.

Scientists in South Australia found that in 18 months the rate of cancer almost doubled among mice exposed to two 30-minute daily doses of radiation at the frequency used for digital mobile phones. The

Australian Government said yesterday that it considered the cancer risk to human beings was minimal.

Concern was first raised last June when research by scientists in the United States and Australia indicated links to asthma and cancer. It suggested that microwaves emitted by the phones could be damaging brain cells.

Guess what time we're open till on election night?



On election night we understand that you've got one more thing to do, which is why we're open till ten.* That should give you plenty of time to cast your vote and do the shopping. And, as an added incentive to celebrate all night, Sainsbury's have put Blanc de Noirs Champagne on offer for £9.99, for Thursday only, saving you £2! So whichever way the swingometer is going, all parties should be swinging too. **Sainsbury's**

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Cash cuts 'threaten university standards'

Cash cuts 'threaten university standards'

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

More than 30,000 holiday-makers booked at one of Britain's biggest seaside camps were told yesterday that it will not open this summer. Four hundred jobs will go at the Barry Island resort on the South Wales coast. Vale of Glamorgan Council this week refused the centre an entertainment licence because of concern over fire safety. The council delayed a final decision until May 14, but Rick Wright, the owner, said that this left only ten days before the opening date, which was not enough.

RUC fire at thief

Police have arrested an armed robber after opening fire while chasing him across fields. He was spotted with a shotgun at a petrol station in Dungannon, Co Tyrone. He was captured unharmed and a gun was recovered.

Railway re-think

Railtrack is to reconsider rules which meant trains continued to run while a body lay between the rails. Lorraine Moore was hit near Billericay, Essex in February. An inquest yesterday recorded an open verdict.

On the tiles

Thieves made a hole in a wineceller's roof to steal 50 cases, mainly Bordeaux and worth about £30,000, in Hallabrow, north Somerset. Simon Wood of Reid Wines said: "Most need ten years to mature before drinking."

Star's new bar

Liz Dawson, who plays the Rovers Return landlady Vera Duckworth in *Coronation Street*, has taken over the franchise on The Grapes pub in central Manchester, near the Granada TV studios where the serial is made.

Crippen watch

David Gainsborough Roberts paid £10,350 for a pocket watch belonging to the murderer Dr Crippen at Christie's. He said his mother was born near the scene in Camden Town where Crippen murdered his second wife.

UNIVERSITIES will decline in quality if they do not receive more money, a member of Sir Ron Dearing's cross-party review of higher education said last night.

David Watson, the Vice-Chancellor of Brighton University, says in a pamphlet that the review would have to produce "remarkable changes" if a serious decline was to be avoided. The combination of budget cuts and more students could no longer be sustained.

Professor Watson, who was a member of the Higher Education Funding Council for England until last year, says that opponents of expansion probably wanted a crisis of quality to prove their case.

Yesterday he told a seminar on the legacy of Conservative control of higher education: "Both students and staff are under remarkable pressure compared to those who experienced the system in the 1970s."

"I think we are looking at a dive in quality if something radical isn't done soon."

"Without the extra £100 million that was put into higher education this year, a majority of institutions would have been in deficit. And the enormous savings expected in two years' time will produce a very serious situation if we don't take action in advance of that."

Several universities are considering closing departments after disappointing performance in last year's research assessment exercise, which partly determines funding levels. Brunel University is the latest, with a proposal to drop physics and chemistry due to be considered in July. Essex University has decided to withdraw its chemistry degree and four others are considering closing or merging physics departments.

Professor Watson's pamphlet, co-written with an education researcher, paints a mixed picture of higher education over 18 years. It says the modernisation of universities, widening opportunities to study, has been achieved without losing their historical strengths.

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ELECTION 97

POLL
DAYDemain la
gauche gagne...

Liberation

France catches our election fever - page 14

How to vote
eurosceptic

Essential guide - page 11

How late do I need
to watch the results?

A sleepy viewers' guide - page 12

Two men, two moods at journey's end



John Major's last day of campaigning took the visibly exhausted Prime Minister on a visit to Stevenage town centre yesterday while the final day of Tony Blair's election tour included a visit to Stockton-on-Tees

"NEVER say die" would have conceded too much — that he knew everything was slipping away. Unspoken, it was John Major's motto for this concluding day.

"You've had it, haven't you?" said a journalist, with all the delicacy of a television professional, to the Prime Minister.

"No."

But the fizz was gone. We had started yesterday milling around in Smith Square where the Prime Minister was preparing for the final press conference of his campaign. At 10.45am a stretch Mercedes Benz limousine swept up. Six Chinese leapt out and marched through the doors of

Civility, poise and good grace marked Major's last day on the long campaign trail, writes Matthew Parris

Conservative Central Office. Did they have advance notice of today's result? Had they come to demand their money back? We never discovered.

"If you can keep your head when all around you..." Lesser spirits would have been lowered, but if his were low, he barely let it show. Chin up, calmly defiant, with a brave smile and a friendly word for those he met. Mr Major threw himself into one last dispiriting day's campaigning as though there was everything still to play for. "You've got to admire him,"

was a phrase on the lips even of hardened journalists.

The first question at the press conference came from ITN's Michael Brunson. Had Mr Major read an article written by his older sister: "I hate seeing my little brother looking so tired and knowing it's his own side that have done this to him." Everyone laughed because we knew it was true. Mr Major's grin said one thing — and his voice another: he praised his MPs for their support. Anyway (he said to Mr Brunson), "have you got a big sister?"

Determinedly undownhearted, he even pretended to take seriously a question on the composition of his next Cabinet. Then, confronted with a slip of Stephen Dorrell's tongue (the Health Secretary had appeared to question whether Mr Major was physically fit for the next five years), the Prime Minister turned it aside without rancour, attributing his robust good health to Mr Dorrell's "excellent" stewardship of the NHS.

That this press conference could change nothing, rendered all the more noteworthy the poise, civility

and good grace with which the Prime Minister conducted it. He did so with real stature, and with class.

Neither had deserted Mr Major by the time he reached Wembley Stadium for a tour of an exhibition there, before the World Cup qualifying match to be played last night. One of the stands was giving away free miniature bouncy footballs and Britain's Prime Minister arrived to find a crowd of political journalists bouncing tiny black-and-white balls off the floor: a memorably surreal moment from

an often surreal election campaign. With Norma by his side ("Come on, Normie," he called), he plunged into the crowd, smiling and shaking hands.

Near me was a stall promoting football for FA Cup followers with learning disabilities. Mr Major entered the stall, chatted, inquired and expressed surprise and admiration at their efforts ("just fantastic") before moving on. One can observe, without belittling the importance of such efforts, that this must have been very difficult for a man at the end of his prem-

iership and on the brink of defeat to do. "Nice bloke," I heard someone say, sotto voce.

This was the real thing. "Go on! Lift it up!" the photographers and TV cameramen began to yell. Mr Major declined. "It's your last day, for heaven's sake!" shouted someone. Mr Major smiled. As he smiled (it was now quite close) I noticed for the first time that he was absolutely exhausted.

A message for London voters, Prime Minister? called a journalist. Mr Major paused, shut his eyes and shook his head, chin dropped, with a momentarily exasperated smile that said "Oh, sod it."

Dancing Blair keeps sense of rhythm as press pack flags

IN A FINAL, frenetic burst of electioneering, Tony Blair bounded across the country yesterday in a performance full of sound, a little fury, and signifying the end of the most gruelling campaign in modern British history.

Every step in Mr Blair's election trail has been carefully choreographed, but yesterday's grand finale was a full-dress operatic production with all the trimmings: two actors, one athlete, a police station, a rugby ground, eight separate press releases, five key constituencies, a bit of Scotland and a primary school.

The aim was clear: club the media, with heavy symbolism, into final submission, after 4,168 miles on the road, 64 constituencies, 500 croissants and 1,800 bars of chocolate.

The Labour leader appeared impossibly chirpy at a 7am press conference. His audience peered at him through red eyes, like furtive woodland creatures disturbed in mid-hibernation.

Over the intercom Lou Reed sang "You just keep me hanging on", mirroring both the view of the exhausted hacks and the strategy of Mr Blair, hanging on in anticipation of victory.

Eleanor Goodman of Channel 4 News asked a question



Labour's spin-doctors provided endless musical refrains during a frantic finale to campaigning yesterday. Ben Macintyre found the jingles wearing thin

referring to the "six months of the campaign", then corrected herself to "six weeks, or six years, or whatever it is".

We took coffee, in industrial quantities. Mr Blair, as usual, took nothing for granted.

Then "Tigger" Tony was bouncing off on a circuitous last dash to his own constituency of Sedgefield, by plane and helicopter, stopping at Dumfries, Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough, and Trindon. At each stop Mr Blair made the same announcement — "It's not over till it's over" — like a train conductor in a traveller's nightmare.

A team of Scottish women supporters sent up an ululating chorus in the Braveheart tradition as Mr Blair jumped on to a stage in Dock Park, Dumfries, and the pipers played Scotland the Brave. A memorial to the Titanic just a few yards away might once have summoned up memories

of another apparently unsinkable vessel, were it not that the Tory craft appears so definitively scuttled already.

"I can't make it happen, unless you make it happen," said Mr Blair, after a rousing introduction from actor Richard Wilson who, in familiar Victor Meldrew style, fulminated against the "sleaze-ridden, shifty-eyed" Tories.

"Trusting John Major with the future of Britain is like trusting your wife and daughter with Alan Clark," Mr Wilson suggested.

After a stop in Stockton, the Labour leader climbed on his bus and suddenly, scarily, it seemed the spin-doctors had abandoned us. After weeks of being nannied around the country, we were left bleating and lost. It was a telling sign of how quickly, under the new Blair all-control technique, a dependency culture can develop.

At Middlesbrough police station, Helen Mirren, star of *Prime Suspect*, was on hand to show that Mr Blair will be tough on crime, and tough on the causes of crime.

But at Marton Manor School, getting the message across was a trickier proposition. On one side sat about 100 primary school children. On the other were ranged the banks of cameras. Thus the candidate was required to address the schoolchildren, in his special voice for infants, while looking at us.

He was heckled, very gently, by a small clique of babies. The children sang *There's no hiding place down there, Jerusalem*, and *Doing the skeleton stomp*. Cherie Blair sang "Bring me my bow of burning gold" with gusto, and was congratulated by her husband.

"See that ghoul, playing the fool. Doing the skeleton stomp," the little ones warbled.

But then, my mind now attuned to automatic cynicism, I began to wonder. Was the music teacher a spin-doctor in disguise? Was the ghoul a reference to John Major, a man with no hiding place? Surely not. Please, not. I have been on this bus too long. Roll on tomorrow.

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The Stamina Factor: Final Figures

John Major:
Age: 54
Freshness
rating: ★★
Miles travelled:
10,040
Constituencies
visited: 56
Hours spent
campaigning on
the streets: 91
Interviews: More than 200
Press conferences and rallies: 28
Average working day: 19 hours
Opinion poll high: 37% Low: 28%



Tony Blair:
Age: 43
Freshness
rating: ★★★★★
Miles travelled:
10,000
Constituencies
visited: 60
Hours spent
campaigning on
the streets: 40
Interviews: 420
Press conferences and rallies: 59
Average working day: 18.5 hours
Opinion poll high: 55% Low: 42%



Paddy Ashdown:
Age: 56
Freshness
rating: ★★★
Miles travelled:
17,300
Constituencies
visited: 64
Hours spent
campaigning on
the streets: 45
Interviews: 200
Press conferences and rallies: 29
Average working day: 18.5 hours
Opinion poll high: 19% Low: 9%



High points: Being mobbed in East London by Bangladeshi chanting: Long Live John Major. His off-the-cuff speech to morning press conference on single currency.
Low point: Discovery that ministers had broken ranks to oppose single currency, followed by open rebellion within his party.

High point: Unscripted speech to party faithful in Edinburgh when he spelt out his core beliefs and policies without being fazed by the failure of his lapel microphone.
Low point: Confusion over Labour's devolution policy when comparing a Scottish parliament to an English parish council.

High point (personal): Birth of his grandson, Mathias. (Political): Impromptu speech to hundreds of supporters outside packed rally in Oxford.
Low point: Having to sit between Lords Jenkins and Steel while they concede Lib Dems would never achieve power.

Voters still see Labour as party of high taxation

MORI finds 21 per cent remain undecided, Peter Riddell writes

THREE-FIFTHS of the public still believe that a future Labour government would increase income tax, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

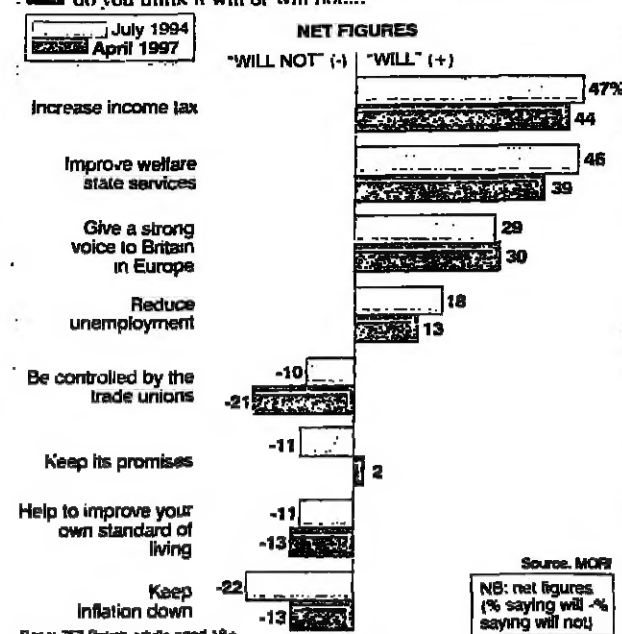
The poll, conducted on Tuesday, shows that, despite Labour's very big lead over the Tories, the public has modest expectations of what a Blair government will achieve in office. The drive by Tony Blair to change the Labour Party and of Gordon Brown to eradicate its past tax and spending image have had only a partial impact.

A MORI poll taken in July 1994, just before Mr Blair was elected Labour leader, showed that 66 per cent believed a future Labour government would increase income tax, and 19 per cent thought it would not do so. Now, after Labour's specific election pledge not to raise the basic and higher rates of income tax, some 63 per cent still believe that in government the party would increase income tax, with 19 per cent dissenting. The balance is roughly the same among those who have switched to Labour since the 1992 election.

Moreover, more than half the public thinks the party would not help improve their own standard of living, compared with a third who believe it would. These are slightly less favourable ratings than when Mr Blair was elected party leader. But half the

THE NEW GOVERNMENT: PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS

Q If a Labour government is elected after the general election, do you think it will or will not...?



Labour switchers believe that in government the party would help improve their own standards of living, with a third disagreeing.

The public is evenly divided on whether a Labour government would keep its promises. This represents some improvement on when Mr Blair was elected; then 40 per cent thought that a Labour government would not keep its

promises and just 35 per cent believed it would. But more than three-quarters of those who have switched to Labour since 1992 believe it will keep its promises, with just a tenth disagreeing.

There has also been a shift in Labour's favour since Mr Blair became leader on keeping inflation down and being controlled by the trade unions. A third of the public now

think that Labour has the best policies for managing the economy, as against a quarter who believe the Tories do.

Some 40 per cent of the public think Mr Blair would be the most capable Prime Minister, compared with 23 per cent for John Major. At the start of the campaign, Mr Blair was ahead by 46 per cent to 22 for Mr Major. This is the opposite of the position five years ago when Mr Major was ahead of Neil Kinnock by 38 to 27 per cent.

The poll also suggests that turnout today may be lower than in the 1992 election. Some 71 per cent say they are certain to vote.

This compares with 68 per cent a week ago, but is well down on the 82 per cent saying they were certain to vote in the final MORI poll of the 1992 campaign. Then, actual turnout in Britain was 78 per cent. Only a half of 18 to 24-year-olds say they are certain to vote today compared with nearly four-fifths of those aged over 25.

People in safe Labour seats look less likely to vote than those in marginals. Just three-fifths in Labour seats say they are certain to vote.

Moreover, 21 per cent of those naming a party say they may still change their mind. This is down from 26 per cent in the poll a week ago, but up from 16 per cent in the final poll of the 1992 campaign. Of those who say they may still



A returning officer outside Britain's oldest polling station in Machelney Abbey, Somerset. Today's turnout is expected to be lower than in 1992, with some 71 per cent expected to vote compared to 78 per cent five years ago

Vain attempt to escape foregone conclusion

JOHN MAJOR is, at least, going out with dignity — before the recriminations start after 10pm tonight. His final election broadcast, on the BBC's *Election Call* and yesterday's press conference, probably his last full one as Prime Minister, showed his strengths. The Tories do have a case, on maintaining a competitive economy. But it was not enough, and was probably never going to be enough, regardless of what happened during the campaign.

The decisive events of this election occurred in autumn 1992, when sterling was forced out of the exchange-rate mechanism and Tory divisions over Europe became chronic, and in summer 1994, when Tony Blair was elected Labour leader. As a result, the public concluded that the Tories had run out of steam and it was time for change, and that the Blairite Labour Party was no longer a threat.

The only hope for Tory strategists was that Labour divisions would be exposed during the campaign and voters would realise what they had at risk. It has not worked out that way. Mr Major and Brian Mawhinney will no doubt be blamed for failing to authorise this or that advertisement, and for not being Eurosceptic enough. That is unfair but the case is already being marshalled by the ennobled Thatcherite old guard of media advisers. Mistakes have been made, but I doubt if they have made any real difference to the result.



PETER RIDDELL

The Tories' slim hopes were not fulfilled for three reasons. First, the Tories' divisions over Europe resurfaced with a vengeance as a result of the defiance of the leadership line on a single European currency by so many candidates. To blame Kenneth Clarke for preventing a decision to rule out membership of a single currency in the next Parliament, as will now occur, is daft. A "save our pound" platform would have rallied many fewer Tories than the sceptics believe and would have exacerbated party divisions, further damaging the party's prospects. Europe has been mentioned more often but it is not the decisive issue of the campaign. The Tories would have been better advised to emphasise the economy, and their education and housing proposals.

Second, Labour and Mr Blair have fought a near-flawless campaign. Techni-

cally, the party has been a generation ahead of the Tories in its concentration of resources on target seats and voters, in its analysis of shifts in voter opinions and in the presentation of its message. Labour has been more imaginative — for instance, in arranging for Mr Blair to give lectures as well as normal campaign speeches and in highlighting the endorsement of him by entrepreneurs previously hostile to Labour.

The usual dissenters have all toed the line. This has prevented the mistakes that dogged past Labour campaigns. But all this much hyped, and often rather self-important, activity has been secondary to Mr Blair's changes in the strategy and direction of the party.

Third, the Tories were always bantling uphill against a time-for-a-change mood. That has neutralised attempts by the Tory party to deploy its strong points and has been evident everywhere I have travelled around Britain. (Great Western is, incidentally, by far the best of the new train franchises operators that I have used on my journeys.)

And, of course, the whole campaign has been fought against the background of polls pointing, with just one exception, to a Labour landslide. Nevertheless, my unscientific hunch remains the same as at the start of the campaign: that Labour will have an overall majority of between 50 and 65, though with some surprising constituency results.

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Taunton - Jackie Goldfield (Lib Dem)
Teide North - Bill Walker (Con)
Teignbridge - Patrick Nichols (Con)
Telford - Bernard Gentry (Con)
Templebury - Lawrence Roberts (Con)
Thames North - Roger Gale (Con)
Thames South - Jonathan Alton (Con)
Thurrock - Andrew Rosindell (Con)
Tiverton & Honiton - Angus Browning (Con)
Tonbridge & Malling - No recommendation
Totting - James Hutchings (Con)
Totteray - Rupert Allison (Con)

Tortolan - No recommendation
Totawa - Anthony Slean (Con)
Totisham - Sirsma Grant (Lab)
Truro & St Austell - Neil Bado (Con)
(Con)
Tunbridge Wells - Archie Norton
(Con)
Twendale, Eddick & Lauderdale
No recommendation
Tyneham - Toby Jessel (Con)
Tyne Bridge - Adrian Lee (Con)
Tynemouth - Martin Callan
(Con)
Tyneside North - No recommendation
(Con)
Tyronne West - William Thompson
(UUP)

U

Ulster Mid - William McCrea (DUP)
Umsinnar - Sir Nicholas Sion
(Con)
Upper Barn - David Trimble (UUP)
Uxbridge - No recommendation
(Con)

V

Vale of Clwyd - David Edwards
(Con)
Vale of Glamorgan - Wales
Sweeney (Con)
Vale of York - Charles Hall
(Lab)
Vauxhall - Kate Hoey (Lab)

W

Wakefield - Jonathan Peacock
(Con)
Walesley - No recommendation
Waltham North - Mike Beard
(Con)
Walsail South - Les Laak
(Con)
Walthamston - Jill Andrew (Con)
Wansbeck - Paul Green (Con)
Wansley - Mark Priel (Con)
Wantage - Jenny Ryle (Lib Dem)
Warley - Christopher Pincher (Con)
Warrington North - No recommendation
(Con)
Warrington South - Christopher
Grayling (Con)
Warwick & Leamington - Sir Du
ley Smith (Con)
Warwickshire North - Stephen
Hammond (Con)
Watford - Robert Gordon (Con)
Watlington and Porter (Con)
Watson - Michael Skinner (U
Dem)
Weaver Vale - No recommendation
(Con)
Weaverborough - Sir Peter P
(Con)
Wells - David Heathcoat-Amo
(Con)
Welwyn Hatfield - David Eva
(Con)
Wentworth - No recommendation
West Bromwich East - Brian
Misset (Con)
West Bromwich West - Be
Scotchroy (Speaker)
West Ham - Mark MacGregor
(Con)
Westbury - David Faber (Con)
Western Isles - No recommendation
(Con)
Westmorland & Lonsdale - Ty
Collins (Con)
Weston-super-Mare - Brian Cot
(Lib Dem)
Wigan - Mark Loveday (Con)
Wilshire N - James Gray
(Con)
Wiltshire - No recommendation
Winchester - No recommendation
Windsor - No recommendation
Wirral South - Les Byrom (Con)
Wirral West - John Thornton
(Lab)
Witcham - No recommendation
(Con)

Woking - No recommendation
Wokingham - John Redwood
(Con)
Wolverhampton North East - K.
Purchase (Lab)
Wolverhampton South East - W.
Ham Hanbury (Con)
Wolverhampton South West -
A. Jackson (Con)
Woodbridge - Dr Liam Fox (Con)
Worcester - Nicholas Bourn
(Con)
Worsheshire-Mid - No recom-
mendation
Worcestershire West - Michael
Spicer (Con)
Wokington - Richard Blundell
(Con)
Worsley - Terry Lewis (Lab)
Worthing East & Shoreham - To
be decided
Worthing West - Christopher H.
Leib Dem
Wrexham - The - Peter Bruijnse
(Con)
Wrexham - Stuart Andrew (Con)
Wycombe - Paul Bensimus (Lab)
Wyre Forest - Anthony Coomes
(Con)
Wythenshawe & Sale East - Pe-
ter Fleming (Con)

The names we print on this page are, in our judgement, the men and women who most deserve your vote. *The Times* believes the most important issue at this election is Europe, and, in almost every constituency, the wisest vote is one cast for a candidate who, unlike the Commons more sceptical.

With two exceptions, we have resisted the temptation to endorse Referendum or United Kingdom Independence Party candidates. Aside from Sir George Gardiner and Sir James Goldsmith we have endorsed only candidates from parties likely to be in the next Parliament.

Although the Conservative Party is, as a body, more sceptical than Labour or the Liberal Democrats, *The Times* is not giving a blanket endorsement to Conservatives. Far from it. Our first preference is for Labour Eurosceptics. The greater their number, the more difficult it will be for a Blair government to embrace integration. Our next preference is for Conservative Eurosceptics. The more sceptics the Tory Party becomes, as a consequence, the more difficult it will be for

any government to move to closer union. Our preferences thus lead us to endorse the opponents to several Conservatives. In some cases, the Tory is a genuine sceptic who would otherwise deserve support but in *The Times* judgement Labour sceptics are more valuable.

In Vauxhall, for example, Kate Hoxby is our choice, even though the Tory candidate Richard Bacon has convinced our researchers of his sceptical credentials. Mr Bacon had been classified in Monday's *Times* as a Europhile but he is one of several Conservatives who have subsequently clarified their position on Europe to the satisfaction of our research team. We, in turn, have amended our lists.

Tom Sackville, the Home Office Minister standing in Bolton West, was also wrongly classified as pro-European on Monday. Mr Sackville was a member of the European Movement in the past but has recently changed his principled position in favour of integration. He receives *The Times*'s enthusiastic support.

In some seats, where the Tory candidate is conspicuously Europhile, we have

actively endorsed their opponent, the better to nudge the Tory party as a whole in a sceptical direction.

In other cases, different criteria have sometimes explained in past editorials. *The Times* has argued that voters should support Joe Hendron to deny Gerry Adams, and the IRA, a propagandist victory. We support the Labour Europhile Tam Dalyell because of his opposition to devolution and deny our support to the Tory sceptic Neil Hamilton because he has lost our trust.

As we argued on Monday, just as *The Times* makes exceptions to its Eurosceptic rule, so might sceptical readers. Adrian Rogers in Exeter and Jeremy Corbyn in Islington North are both staunch opponents of a single currency. Mr Rogers' views on homosexuality and Mr Corbyn's support for Irish republicanism are two examples of how some sceptics will withhold their support.

Where no candidate has a sufficiently clear, principled, position on Europe, as in Sedgfield or Huntingdon, we have made no recommendation.

Edinburgh South - Elizabeth Smith (Con)
Edinburgh West - No recommendation
Edinburgh West - No recommendation
Edinburgh - Dr Ian Twinn (Con)
Ellenmore Port & Neilson - Lynn Turnbull (Con)
Elm - Colin Burdon (Lab)
Eshan - No recommendation
Enfield North - Mark Field (Con)
Enfield Southgate - Michael Portillo (Con)
Epping Forest - No recommendation
Epsom & Ewell - Sir Archie Hamilton (Con)
Epsom & Ewell - No recommendation
Erith & Thamesmead - John Austin-Walker (Lab)
Essex & Walton - Gary Miles (LD)
Essex North - Bernard Jenkin (Con)
Essex - Dr Adrian Rogers (Con)

F

Falkirk East - Michael Connolly (Lab)
Falkirk West - Dennis Canavan (Lab)
Falmouth & Camborne - No recommendation
Fareham - Sir Peter Lloyd (Con)
Faversham & Kent Mid - Alan Stewart (Lib Dem)
Feltham & Heston - No recommendation
Fermanagh & South Tyrone - Ken Maginnis (DUP)
Fife Central - Jacob Rees-Mogg (Con)
Fife North East - Adam Bruce (Con)
Finsbury & Golders Green - John Macfarlane (Con)
Folkestone & Hythe - Michael Howard (Con)
Forest of Dean - Paul Merland (Con)
Foyke - William Hay (DUP)
Fylde - No recommendation

G

Gainsborough - Edward Leigh

Harrogate & Knaresborough - Norman Lamont (Con)
Harrow East - Tony McNulty (Lab)
Harrow West - Gareth Thomas (Lab)
Hartlepool - Michael Horeley (Con)
Havesham - Iain Sproule (Con)
Haverhill & Pye - Michael Foster (Lab)
Havings - David Willetts (Con)
Hayes & Harrington - No recommendation
Hazel Grove - No recommendation
Hemel Hempstead - Rob Jones (Con)
Hemel Hempstead - No recommendation
Hendon - Sir John Grist (Con)
Hendon - Timothy Horton (Lib Dem)
Hereford - No recommendation
Hereford & Stafford - No recommendation
Herefordshire North East - No recommendation
Herefordshire South West - Ann Sower (Lib Dem)
Hertsmere - No recommendation
Hexham - Ian McIlm (Labour)
Heywood & Middleton - No recommendation
High Wycombe - Charles Handley (Con)
Hillingdon & Harpenden - Peter Riley (Con)
Holborn & St Pancras - Julian Smith (Con)
Hornchurch - John Gryn (Lab)
Hove & Wood Green - No recommendation
Horsesham - Francis Maude (Con)
Houghton & Washington East - Philip Booth (Con)
Howe - Ivor Caplin (Lab)
Huddersfield - Bill Farrow (Con)
Hull East - John Prescott (Lab)
Hull North - David Lee (Con)
Hull West & Hessle - Cormack Moore (Con)
Hull - No recommendation
Hydruim - No recommendation

I

Ilford North - Vivian Benda (Con)
Ilford South - Sir Neil Thorne (Con)

Leigh - Ed Young (Con)
Leamington - Terence James (Lib Dem)
Leam - Norman Baker (Lib Dem)
Lewisham Deptford - No recommendation
Lewisham East - Philip Hollibaugh (Con)
Lewisham West - No recommendation
Leyton & Waselead - Harry Cohen (Lab)
Lichfield - Michael Fabricant (Con)
Lincoln - No recommendation
Linthorpe - Pam Dayrell (Lab)
Liverpool Garston - No recommendation
Liverpool Riverside - No recommendation
Liverpool Walton - Mark Kottecha (Con)
Liverpool Wavertree - Kit Matthews (Con)
Liverpool Woodvale - Neil Moran (Con)
Livingston - Robin Cook (Lab)
Llaneli - Donzil Davies (Lab)
Londonderry East - William Ross (Lib)
Loughborough - Kenneth Andrew (Con)
Louth & Horncastle - Sir Peter Tapsell (Con)
Luton - Christopher Gill (Con)
Luton North - David Senior (Con)
Luton South - Margaret Moran (Lab)

M

Macclesfield - Nicholas Winterton (Con)
Maldenhead - Theresa May (Con)
Maldenstone & The Wye - Ann Widdicombe (Con)
Marefield - Mark Winstanley (Con)
Malden & Chelmsford East - John Whittingdale (Con)
Manchester Blackley - No recommendation
Manchester Central - Simon Mervin (Con)

Marlow North - David Prior (Con)
Marlow North West - Henry Bellingham (Con)
Marlow South - John Macgregor (Con)
Marlow South West - No recommendation
Marston - Fiona Bulmer (Con)
Marston North - Tony Marlow (Con)
Marston South - No recommendation
Marston South - No recommendation
Marston - Steven Webb (Lib Dem)
Marston North - Robert Kinghorn (Con)
Marston South - No recommendation
Marston - No recommendation
Marston East - Andrew Raine (Con)
Marston North - No recommendation
Marston - No recommendation
Marston South - Alan Simpson (Lab)
Marston - No recommendation

O

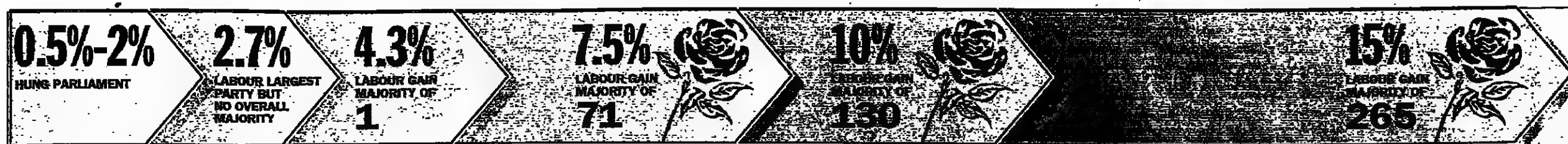
Ochil - Allan Gogart (Con)
Ogmore - Sir Ray Powell (Lab)
Old Bailey & Sticup - Richard Justham (Lab)
Oldham East & Saddleworth - John Hudson (Con)
Oldham West & Royton - Michael Weezer (Lab)
Oldham & Saddleworth - No recommendation
Orpington - John Horam (Con)
Oxford East - Jonathan Djanog (Con)
Oxford West & Abingdon - Ewen Harris (Lib Dem)

P

Paisley North - Irene Adams (Lab)
Paisley South - No recommendation
Pendle - Gordon Prentice (Lab)
Penrith & The Border - David Mackinlay (Con)
Perth & North Perth (Con)
Peterborough - Jacqueline Foster (Con)

FULL ELECTION RESULTS GUIDE IN THE TIMES ON SATURDAY

The Times's step-by-step guide to the critical election results — and where to hear and see them



Key seats for couch potatoes

POLITICAL obsessives and insomniacs will find plenty to keep them interested until well past 3am but for those who want to go to bed earlier the outcome should become clear long before that.

10pm

The ballot boxes are closed and the exit polls are unveiled. Five years ago the exit polls, based on interviews with voters as they leave polling stations, underestimated the Tory lead, though by much less than the final newspaper polls. The broadcasters projected a hung parliament for a long time before this was contradicted by the real results. Much time and effort has gone into getting the exit polls right this time.

There will be an hour or two before anything of real importance happens, which will be filled with talking heads, campaign retrospectives and the like.

Results from some rural and small town seats in England will be later than usual because county council elections are also being held today and different ballot papers will have to be sorted out.

11pm

Sunderland South and Sunderland North fight it out in the first to declare. Watch for possible record held by Billelway with a 57-minute count in 1994. Both safe Labour so turnout could be the best guide to what is happening.

11.45: Torbay where Liberal Democrats hope to unseat Tory spy writer Rupert Allason. Tories are in serious trouble in the South West if they lose Torbay to the Liberal Democrats who could see the start of a breakthrough.

MIDNIGHT

Time for coffee and waking-up for the first rush of important results. Birmingham Edgbaston should be the first marginal to declare, giving a first indication of the likely picture of the overall result. If Labour wins this seat it is heading for a Commons majority, and if it wins Bromsgrove it will be heading for a landslide. Sir George Gardiner hopes to win



his old seat of Reigate for the Referendum Party, and the first likely Labour cabinet ministers should also be elected: Donald Dewar in Glasgow Anniesland, Clare Short in Birmingham Ladywood and George Robertson in Hamilton South.

12.15: Tories will be worried if they lose Portsmouth South to the Liberal Democrats. The Conservative David Martin beat Mike Hancock, a former MP for the seat, by just 243 votes last time.

12.30: By now the result should start to get clearer with more than 50 seats declared. Rochdale and Oldham East and Saddleworth, both held by the Liberal Democrats, are needed by Labour for an overall majority. If Nick Budgen holds on in Wolverhampton South West the overall result may be close. Battersea will show whether Labour is heading for a small overall majority if John Bows, Minister for Transport in London, is defeated. If he holds on, there could be a hung parliament. Labour could take Putney if Sir James Goldsmith beats David Mellor's share of the vote.

The Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, should be returned in West Bromwich West where she is unchallenged by the major parties. Likely Labour Home Secretary Jack Straw should win Blackburn. Labour and Conservative strategists Peter Mandelson and David Willetts will be able to return to London when they win in Hartlepool and Havant respectively.

1am

Whether Labour is heading for a narrow majority or a landslide should be clearer by now. The first

Peter Riddell and Mark Henderson pick out the telling moments in the final election countdown

big batch of declarations should see some big names winning and losing. Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, is defending a weaker-than majority in Stirling. Glenda Jackson should win the all-woman contest in Hampstead and Highgate.

Alan Clark's return from the political wilderness will be complete when he wins Kensington and Chelsea, the safest Tory seat in the land.

New Labour image-maker Barbara Follett, wife of novelist Ken Follett, hopes to win the key marginal of Stevenage. Gloucester would give Labour an overall majority of one if there is a uniform swing. If Labour captures both Bury North and Gloucester it will be sure of an overall Commons majority. If it wins Luton North, it will have a big enough majority to last a full parliament without any trouble.

1.15: Paddy Ashdown can go back to London when his seat Yeovil declares. Liberal Democrats will feel confident of reuniting with more MPs if they win Southport. Dame Angela Rumbold, the Tory vice-chairman who came out against a single currency, is a likely loser in Middlesbrough and Middlesbrough.

1.30: Several ministers are likely to fall if Tories are heading for defeat: Philip Oppenheim, Sir Derek Spencer and Greg Knight. The defining seat of 1992, Basildon, is likely to go to Labour this time.

Further Labour wins in Milton Keynes South West, Stockton South and Brighton Pavilion would indicate a small overall majority. In Yorkshire, Norman Lamont faces a strong Liberal Democrat challenge in Harrogate and Knaresborough, and the strength of New Labour in the party's heartland will be tested in Potters Bar and Castleford, where Gordon Brown's former economics adviser Yvette Cooper is standing. The only MP already elected in 1997, Labour's Ben Chapman, faces a second battle for Wirral South in what will be almost as many months.

1.45: Sedgefield will declare for Tony Blair, and Sir Edward Heath should continue as Father of the House with victory in Old Bexley and Sidcup.

The Liberal Democrats have high hopes of winning Hazel Grove, and Worcester woman may go to Labour for the first time.

2am

The result should be clear within a few seats. The list of Tory casualties could be very long by now with more Cabinet ministers at risk: Malcolm Rifkind and Ian Lang, and even William Waldegrave, Gillian Shephard and Michael Portillo if the Tories are doing very badly.

Watch out for Tory scappies starting to claim Conservative leadership and John Major for defeat. Future leadership contenders may start staking out their positions.

If the Tories lose Dartford and Ealing North, Labour should have a sizeable working majority. The seat which has attracted more column inches in the campaign than any other, Tatton, will declare either for Neil Hamilton or Martin Bell.

Several cabinet ministers face stern tests, particularly Malcolm Rifkind in Edinborough Peasants and Ian Lang in Galloway and Upper Nithsdale, which could go to the SNP. Even Michael Portillo's Epsom Southgate could be vulnerable to a big Labour swing and tactical



voting. In Exeter, the homophobic Tory Dr Adrian Rogers faces the gay BBC journalist Ben Bradshaw, for Labour, while Runrig singer Donnie Munro hopes to win Ross, Slay and Inverness West for Labour from heavyweight Liberal Democrat Charles Kennedy.

The former Countdown presenter Cyles Brandreth will do well to hold on to City of Chester, and Claire Ward, 24, could be youngest MP of the next parliament if she wins Watford.

Gordon Brown should have little trouble in Doncaster East, and John Prescott should increase his majority in Hull East.

2.15: Hastings and Rye could be close three ways. The Liberal Democrats were second last time, but Labour has made strides in council elections and hopes to unseat Tory Jacqui Lall.

2.30: Weatherhane seat Gravesham, which has always elected an MP from the governing party, is expected to deliver a narrow Labour majority. Walter Sweeney will lose the most marginal seat in the country, Vale of Glamorgan, if just ten voters change sides.

Old Labour will find its Commons place when Ken Livingstone's Brent East and Dennis Skinner's Bolsover declare.

Michael Howard should win Folkestone and Hythe, and Brian Mawhinney should be safe in his new seat of Cambridge North West.

Only political bulls need stay up any longer as the flow of results starts to slow down to a trickle. Any Liberal Democrat gains are likely to be around now. Tabloid target Jerry Hayes needs a miracle to hold off Labour in Harlow, and David Evans, the Tory loudmouth with-and-driver views, could lose Welwyn Hatfield.

A real cabbie could also make the Commons if Clive Efford wins Ebbw Vale for Labour. Archie Norman, the Asda chair-

man, should hold Tisbury Wells for the Tories comfortably, and Beaconsfield should stay blue after the departure of the cash-for-questions former minister Tim Smith.

The Liberal Democrats have a good chance of capturing Tooting.

3.30: Christchurch, the Liberal Democrats' most spectacular by-election success, should be recaptured by former roads minister Christopher Chope, but it could be close.

Sebastian Coe faces defeat in Falmouth and Camborne, targeted by both the Liberal Democrats and Labour.



The Eurosceptic rotweiler David Shaw is expected to lose Dover to Labour, but John Redwood should be safely re-elected in Wokingham.

John Major should be re-elected with a big majority in Huntingdon. Party leaders will make concessions of defeat and claims of victory.

John Major is likely to be the last of the party leaders to be elected. The Liberal Democrats have high hopes of taking Oxford West and Abingdon.

The Conservatives look like losing their only Asian MP, Nirj Deva, in Brentford and Isleworth.

Stephen Dorrell should have no trouble winning the new safe Tory seat of Charnwood. His old seat, marginal Loughborough, could go to Labour.

SCREEN TEST

THE battle for election viewers will begin at 9.55pm when the channels will compete to boast the fastest and most sophisticated coverage to date (Alexandra Freeman and Carol Midgley write).

The BBC claims it will deliver the most thorough coverage with the longest programme in its 75-year history — 7 hours 47 minutes — using 80 outside broadcast units at a cost of £25 million. David Dimbleby, Jeremy Paxman and Peter Snow will head the team in a programme which will include state-of-the-art graphics and a virtual reality swingometer. The results of its exit poll of 16,000 people will be revealed immediately. The programme ends at 5.25am.

ITV is promising to be the fastest to deliver results. Unlike the BBC, it will not wait until the returning officer has announced the vote.

Jonathan Dimbleby will front Election '97 with Alastair Stewart, who will use a studio audience and virtual reality House of Commons to illustrate the results. It will stay on air until 4am.

Sky News also promises

instant results from 10pm. Nick Pollard, head of news, said Sky was aiming to provide the fastest access.

The non-election alternatives on mainstream television are disappointing. There is a 90-minute break between the publication of the BBC's exit poll at 10pm and the expected announcement of the first real result at 11.30pm.

Unfortunately the two mainstream channels which have declared themselves election-free zones for the night, Channels 4 and 5, have not tailored their schedules accordingly.

Channel 5 has scheduled a relatively obscure comedy film, *Widows*, starring Kirstie Alley, at 9pm. Channel 4 has an ambitious movie triple bill, starting at 9pm with the Robbie Coltrane comedy *The Pope Must Die*, followed at 10.55pm by *Maximum Overdrive*, and at 12.40 by *Pulp*.

BBC2 features *Election Night Armistice*, an "alternative" results programme where Valerie Singleton will be illustrating the incoming election returns with the help of a bouncy castle masquerading as the House of Commons.

SOUND BITES

ANYONE looking for an escape route from the night's election coverage on radio would be well advised to hide in Swampy, but even a tunnel dug out of the main election studio is likely to come up in another one pumping out the same results (Peter Barnard writes).

The night's oddest couple consists of Jimmy Young, doyen of radio presenters, and John Cole, former BBC politician, who will host a party, free, from 11pm to 12.30am on Radio 2 from 10.30pm.

That is a more bizarre, compared with radio's main event, a simulcast on Radios 4 and 5 Live from 10pm until 6am. The presenter is James Naughtie.

Only Radios 1 and 3 offer election-free zones. Between 11.30pm and 1am, Mary Anne Hobbs will be playing music on Radio 1 while the diverse joys of Rachmaninov and Andy Sheppard's jazz will be heard on Radio 3. Even Classic FM has an election programme starting at 11pm.

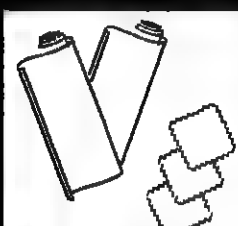
For the best news to come in to Naughtie and Co will be just after 1am when the exit polls start seeping out for us around midnight, when key marginals will declare and in the hour after 1am when results will be pouring in.

LAURA ASHLEY HOME EVENT SAVINGS



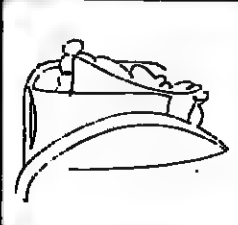
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THE SAFEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE.

Domestos

A glance across the Channel could decide floating voters

EUROPHILES! Are you still dithering about which way to vote? Then track down yesterday's edition of the French daily *Liberation*, and ask yourself this: do you really want still closer integration with a country that is taking the British general election even more seriously than Peter Mandelson?

Yesterday's *Liberation* devoted 34 of its 40 pages to the British general election and to the culture that has made Britain the world's swinging hotpot once again (Dennis Skinner and Nicholas Budgen excepted, of course). French newspapers and magazines must always be looking for an excuse to avoid putting Johnny Hallyday, the nation's only lasting star, on the front cover yet again. But is the duller ever British election campaign really the right cuckoo to choose?

It's not as if the French don't have a perfectly good election of their own to get prolix about. But maybe if Jean-Marie Le Pen is your shiniest political star, you have a big incentive to go looking elsewhere for political illumination. This might be why, in contrast to its extended British coverage, the left-wing daily spent only four pages on its own domestic election race.

Liberation's assault on London is part of a wider French fascination with the British and our election. As Yolaine de la Bigne, a commentator for the *France Info* radio station, puts it, the British are an enigma: "By day, they are very well behaved in their bowler hats. By night, they go mad!" Clearly, the French have not aban-



The French are taking our election even more seriously than Peter Mandelson, with one left-wing paper running a 34-page report. But if they think ours is so interesting, Joe Joseph asks, what must their own be like?

done all their antique stereotypes of the British, presumably because they've been far too busy plauding their onions.

"Tomorrow the left wins" declared *Liberation's* front page triumphantly — possibly hoping to catch readers off-guard in a country where millions still feel passionately about socialist ideas, but where the Left is currently as politically lively as François Mitterrand — before adding in rather smaller letters underneath, "in Great Britain".

Britain, the newspaper says right across the top of page two, "appears to have turned the page of Conservatism", although at the bottom of the page it is also careful to explain that the Thatcher heritage has been embraced by New Labour. It even recounts the hoary story of Tony Blair and the man washing his Ford Sierra.

Liberation's editor Laurent Joffrin says that: "If Blair succeeds in power, we will have hope." But confusingly, in his editorial, he is snuffy about the so-called successes of the Thatcherism that his new-found saviour has apparently embraced. Joffrin says that British productivity

"is always 10 per cent below that of France". He adds that 15 years of "triumphant" Thatcherism produced an average growth rate of just over 2 per cent, while 14 years of disastrous (as we say) socialism delivered a growth rate of... just over 2 per cent. So there.

Liberation's graphics department has been let loose on page four, turning Blair's and John Major's journeys to Downing Street into a metro map. Each party leader is given his own station — "Blair Way" and "Major Circus" — and their routes run from Blair's birth in Edinburgh in 1953 and Major's in Worcester Park ten years earlier all the way to Number 10, with brief stops at interchanges to pick up extra passengers — Cherie and Norma, respectively.

Editorials from *The Times*, the *Financial Times* and *The Independent* are reproduced before the newspaper lurches northwards, the better to educate its French readers on Scottish devolution and the trap it poses for Blair ("He is promising them a parliament, but Scotland dreams of independence").

A broadside against British private schools ("a factory for the elite"), explaining how Blair and new Labour have "abandoned the crusade against selection", is followed by pages of domestic British news about new alcoholic milkshakes, the possibility of dogs catching "mad cow disease", a few domestic crime stories, an article despairing at the state of Britain's national health service, and another despairing at the state of Britain's public transport network.

Then comes news of British fashion, restaurants, banks, an article on how Liverpool is at the bottom of the economic heap. The sports pages? British. The arts pages go Anglo-French by discussing the British offensive at the Cannes Film Festival. For the media page, *Liberation's* man decamped to "Basildon, the town which votes like *The Sun*" to take the pulse of Essex Man. The metro page has an interview with Nick Hornby, "new-lad" author of *Fever Pitch*.

Pity those poor Britons who fled to France precisely to escape all this, checked into their hotel room and then opened their newspaper to choose a movie only to discover that even *Liberation's* going-out guide is all British.

There can only be one explanation: *Liberation* is preparing readers for the day when everyone in the European Union will vote in each other's elections. So if you ever start seeing Johnny Hallyday on the front of *The Times*, start worrying.

Additional reporting by Adam Sage in Paris.

LIBRE MADE IN ENGLAND

Liberation

Demain la gauche gagne...

en Grande-Bretagne

Accord entre le PS et le PCF

Moins de chômeurs, plus d'emplois précaires

34 pages d'enquêtes et de reportages outre-Manche

It takes a British election to get Johnny Hallyday off the French front pages

Suddenly all the world is Euro-sceptic

By Peter Foster and Mark Henderson

THE TIMES'S decision to back Eurosceptics, whatever their party allegiance, has produced some spectacular political acrobatics from dozens of Tory candidates suddenly desperate to stand up to Brussels.

From the moment the list of approved sceptics was published on Monday morning the telephones on the *Times* election desk were ringing with Tory candidates and their agents pleading new-found Eurosceptic credentials.

Philip Oppenheim, the Treasury Minister moved to telephone *The Times* in per-

Hamstead and Highgate, went so far as to accuse *The Times* of sabotaging her campaign. "I'm not a Europhile, and I'm only up against a small majority," she said. "If I lose, you'll have had a hand in it."

And so the calls continued at a fearful rate, jamming the switchboard. "I've got another one here," gasped a weary operator. It was Peter Butler on his mobile telephone from a doorstep in his Milton Keynes constituency. "This is a scandal, you could cost me the election," he fumed. "You just tell them to put me on that list. I'm a Eurosceptic, always have been."

Despite a more charming approach from his agent, Mr Butler's ill-mannered protestations fell on stony ground. He is opposed by a Labour Eurosceptic and, under *The Times* leading article rules of engagement, he is not eligible for endorsement.

Another candidate took direct action. Richard Bacon, standing in Vauxhall, boarded his battle-taxi, decked out in full campaign colours, and high-tailed it down to the News International Plant at Wapping in east London to "doosey" *The Times*. "I'm a Eurosceptic, and you've endorsed my opponent," Mr Bacon said, brandishing a rolled-up copy of his campaign newspaper *The Bacon*. Mr Bacon also faces a Eurosceptic Labour candidate, Kate Hoey.

The rush to get on *The Times* list even drove some candidates to tell shameful tales about their colleagues: "You can't endorse Alun Cairns in Gower," whined one desperate Tory. "He's not a Eurosceptic at all!" At least one candidate left his sceptical credentials in no doubt. The fax whirled with a message from Michael Colvin, candidate for Ramsey: "Where I stand on Europe: No Surrender," his election address declared.



Gibson: says *Times* to blame if she loses

sion, was first in line. "I'm most surprised you haven't included me in your list of Eurosceptics," said the well-lacquered old Harrovian who will need divine intervention to hold Amber Valley today. "I've always opposed a single currency."

However, two weeks ago, when *The Times* was tracking down ministerial rebels against John Major's wait-and-see policy, Mr Oppenheim was less forthcoming: "Philip is totally loyal to John Major. He supports negotiate and decide," his agent had assured us.

Elizabeth Gibson, standing against Glenda Jackson in

ELECTION ON THE INTERNET

The Internet edition of *The Times* (<http://www.the-times.co.uk>) will carry all constituency results, updated within minutes of each announcement, as well as the full service of articles and opinion from the newspaper's final 4.30 am edition. Its News Update section will show the latest state of the parties throughout Friday.

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Cold front evaporates as Kinnocks breeze in



'I would have liked to have won, but I don't regret that the party is now being led by a young man of vision,' Neil Kinnock tells Damian Whitworth

NEIL KINNOCK hung his head and screwed up his face in anguish. "This is tormenting me," he moaned. But on a sunny day in a South Wales garden it was not the vividness of his memory that was haunting him but his forgetfulness. Before a spot of campaigning in the Tory marginal of Chepstow yesterday he was taking a coffee break and chatting about music with party workers and struggling to remember the name of a local composer. Five years ago on the eve of the last election he stood on the threshold of power, his mind consumed by thoughts of Downing Street. With his busy life as the European Transport Commissioner Mr Kinnock hardly has time to be eaten up by bitterness, and anyway he is too gregarious to be so inclined.

But there are certain things that he doesn't easily forget.

Over the coffee, before I had uttered a word to Mr Kinnock, Glenys recalled that she had been displeased about an article I had contributed to *The Times* diary revealing their son Stephen's engagement. "But we'll forget about that," she said in her usual charming, diplomatic way. "No we won't, he's a shit," said Neil simply and turned away.

This rather took me by surprise and I sensed that the day might not be so sunny after all. As the Kinnocks swept through Chepstow town centre with the local candidate Huw Edwards, everyone seemed to want to shake their hands. And although a cold front was moving in my direction from party workers Mr Kinnock was beginning to



Neil Kinnock, left, canvassing with Huw Edwards, Labour candidate in the Tory marginal of Chepstow

thaw. Under a war memorial bearing the inscription "They shall rise again in greater glory", he explained that he was not bitter. "Certainly we are going to win, but obviously we are not complacent. I would have liked to have won, but I don't regret in any way that the party is now being led by a young man of ability and vision," he said.

"Tony wrote a letter to me on the day that the election was declared saying 'if we make it it will be a tribute to your work'. That was a lovely,

generous thing to do." Somebody else pointed out that on the eve of the last election it was similarly beautiful weather and he had said: "The sun is out and so are the Tories." He then said: "There are some words that I am glad to revisit but I don't think I'll repeat my weather forecast."

Then came an extraordinary disclosure. "Weather is part of my portfolio," he said as he skipped off to press more flesh. The mind boggled. Was he planning regulation weather across the Continent?

The party adjourned to The Star in the picturesque village of Llansoy. Feeling conciliatory I offered to buy him a pint. "No, no I'll get them," he replied disarmingly before explaining that his weather responsibilities mainly involved the funding of meteorological research. "I'm also responsible for time," he added, but despite visions of him sporting a huge beard and a trident I couldn't cross examine Old Father Kinnock any further because we were getting on so well by now that

he was cracking jokes. "What do you call a train that goes straight past when you've been waiting for half an hour?" he asked. I confessed I didn't know. "Thomas the Bastard!" he roared. Tomorrow he will go to Llanym, his former constituency where he still has a house, to vote and then back to London to participate in the BBC's coverage of the election results. "Thank you, for all your help," I said as we parted. "No problem, anytime," he replied with a cheery wave.

Moaning Major has still not got media message

ONE of this campaign's defining moments arrived seven minutes into Election Call on BBC 1 and Radio 4 yesterday when Margaret Curds rang up John Major to say that the Conservatives were going to lose and that it was their own fault. The point being that Mrs Curds is a Tory supporter in Hampshire. "We're going to lose tomorrow, John, because we have not woken up in time to the fact that the grassroots have moved and the Labour Party has become a different animal... we've failed to get our message across... we have failed from Central Office right the way through."

The blame "ultimately has to rest at your door," she told Mr Major. This was damning confirmation from the Tory grassroots of what neutral observers have been saying for weeks. How would he respond?

His core answer came after another related question and an interjection from Peter Sissons, the presenter, who said that if the answer to getting the message across was to steal some of Labour's presentational clothes, then surely the Prime Minister "had a duty to do so".

Something seemed to snap in Mr Major. Outwardly he remained calm, but we were about to discover that the plight of the Tory party was not of its own making. It was all got up by the media.

I quote Mr Major, not selectively, but in full: "The message is filtered through whatever happens to be the message of the day. I may speak at length about the

details of education policy but if that happens not to be on the agenda of the media, you hear very little about it."

"You hear about the squabble of the day, the disagreement of the day, the gaffe of the day, but the details of how I propose to improve education, you can't encapsulate those things in a soundbite. I might make a 40-minute speech on the welfare state. I'll get one minute of it on the news if I'm lucky."

How interesting that, even in complaining about the media, Mr Major cannot stay "on message". First he cites education policy and then switches to the

RADIO WATCH

PETER BARNARD

welfare state, a mark of the way the Tories have muddled their messages.

Mr Major's version of events lies in the face of the public perception. There have been many complaints, to the BBC in particular, about too much election coverage.

The issues in this campaign have been reported and analysed to within an inch of their lives. Mr Major's complaint yesterday sounded like sour grapes, like a *de facto* admission that Labour understands the media but the Tories do not. "I think new Labour," Mr Major said, "have been a brilliant marketing exercise."

He meant it as a criticism, but if an election campaign is not a marketing exercise, what else is it?

Phone Tory snubbed over 'sleaze secrets'

THE Conservative activist who accused John Major of failing grassroots workers on Election Call was disowned by her local party after selling Tory "sleaze secrets" to a tabloid newspaper, it emerged yesterday. Margaret Curds, 47, a former ward secretary in Southampton, was shunned by Conservatives in the area after her claims, denied by the men she named, appeared in the *Sunday Mirror* in March. They last night dismissed her as an irrelevance. Liz Ross-Bartell, election agent for Michael Colvin, who is fighting a notional 2,700 majority in the newly created Romsey constituency, said: "I feel she has let the side down." Mrs Curds, a



Margaret Curds: caller

divorcee, last night insisted she was not put up to embarrass the Prime Minister by the Labour Party and would still vote Conservative.

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Rebels vow to take capital as Mobutu stalls over talks

By SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

LAURENT KABILA's rebel forces in Zaire yesterday pledged to continue their advance on the capital, Kinshasa, after President Mobutu threw diplomats into disarray by quibbling over the venue for talks with Mr Kabila.

The two major players in Zaire's drama parried and thrust over the head of the US special envoy, Bill Richardson, who earlier thought he had secured an agreement for face-to-face talks. Last night Mr Richardson again said he had secured agreement for talks on a South African ship in international waters off West Africa. The talks would be chaired by the United Nations, he said.

The squabble was a last-ditch attempt to re-open a rift on policy in Zaire between France, which until recently publicly backed Mr Mobutu, and Washington, where the ailing President has already been described as "history" by

the State Department. The argument over where the talks would take place amounted to bickering over what language the hosts should speak.

Both sides had agreed that the meeting would be chaired by Nelson Mandela, who has a close relationship with Washington and has been used to further the US initiative because of his personal relationship with Mr Mobutu, and his standing as an international statesman.

Earlier, while the South African Navy ship SAS *Oukeniqua* was already steaming to a position in the Atlantic off the coast of Zaire where South African officials thought the meeting would be held, Mobutu Nzinga, 27, the President's son and spokesman, announced that the meeting would not take place. He suggested neighbouring Congo or Gabon as alternatives. Both West African countries are former French

colonies which Mr Kabila is reluctant to visit because he fears an assassination plot and has hinted that the French might even be involved in planning his murder.

Bizima Karaha, the rebel foreign affairs spokesman and a former medical doctor in South Africa, said he did not care if Mr Mobutu refused to meet Mr Kabila. "We lose nothing by not meeting Mr Mobutu. If anything, we have bent backwards too much for the man, given our military superiority on the ground. We are more than happy to take the war to Kinshasa and end Mobutu's arrogance. In fact, our forces are consolidating their approach towards Kinshasa. He must know it is the end game," he said.

The main difference between France and other Western powers is that Paris believes Zaire is "on track for democratic elections later this year". One French official



Rwandan refugees leave a ferry at Kisangani yesterday, on their way back home from Zaire at the start of a 60-day UN evacuation operation

said: "We cannot allow a man like Kabila to come to power by force of arms in a democratic age."

The view shared privately by other European Union partners is that Zaire's Pres-

ident, already suffering from cancer, should be persuaded to step down, and that he has done nothing but obstruct democratic development in his country since he legalised opposition parties in 1990.

Hervé de Charette, the French Foreign Minister, and Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, held telephone talks to try to bring a unified diplomatic position to the chaos threatening to en-

gulf Zaire. A spokesman in Paris said the two ministers had agreed that Zaire's belligerents should agree to a five-point UN plan which includes an immediate cessation of hostilities, and a peace-

ful transition of power. Mr Kabila's reputation as a "saviour" of Zaire has been badly tarnished by recent reports of massacres of Rwandan Hutu refugees at the hands of his Tutsi warriors.

UN begins airlift of refugees

FROM REUTERS
IN KISANGANI

A UNITED Nations airlift of Rwandan refugees from Zaire began in earnest yesterday.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees said 186 unaccompanied children left Kisangani for Kigali, the Rwandan capital, on an Ilyushin plane and 50 refugees would soon leave for

Gisenyi in Rwanda. "This is the start of the airlift which we hope will break the logjam and get these refugees home," Peter Kessler, a UNHCR spokesman, said. Officials said, however, that a fuel shortage in Uganda meant two more Ilyushins could not join flights yesterday.

Laurent Kabila, the rebel leader, gave UN agencies 60 days from last Thursday to

return all refugees to Rwanda but on Tuesday he told Bill Richardson, the visiting American diplomat, that he was prepared to be flexible.

UN officials have said that it would be impossible to repatriate all 100,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees south of Kisangani and another 250,000 unaccompanied for in Zaire within 60 days even with full rebel co-operation.

Italy ends royal heir's exile

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS
IN ROME

THE Cabinet of the Italian Prime Minister, Romano Prodi, yesterday approved a proposal by the Centre-Left leader to amend the Constitution so the colourful heir to the Italian throne, Prince Vittorio Emanuele, may return home after 50 years in exile.

The decision was welcomed by Italian monarchists who have been campaigning for decades against the ban on direct male heirs to the House of Savoy setting foot in Italy. "This is a very beautiful thing," said Gennaro Malgeri, editor of the "post-Fascist" newspaper *Secolo d'Italia*. "I am very happy."

Domenico Fisichella, a monarchist philosopher and politician, from the conservative National Alliance party, hailed "a signal of a serene, historical review of a crucial phase of our national affairs."



Vittorio Emanuele: was tried for manslaughter

Under the Cabinet decision Professor Prodi will draw up a Government Bill to amend the 13th section of the Constitution. It will be presented for approval to Parliament. The Bill is expected to become law because the main political parties from across the spectrum reached agreement in

November 1995 in the constitutional affairs committee of the Senate to revoke the ban.

Signor Prodi promised monarchists during the general election campaign last year that Vittorio Emanuele, 59, and his popular son, Emanuele Filiberto, 23, would be welcome in Italy.

The monarchy was abolished in Italy in 1946 after a popular referendum in which republicans claimed the royal family had been discredited by its links with the Fascist dictatorship of Benito Mussolini.

Vittorio Emanuele was for many years considered a source of national embarrassment after he was tried — and acquitted — in a French court on charges of manslaughter.

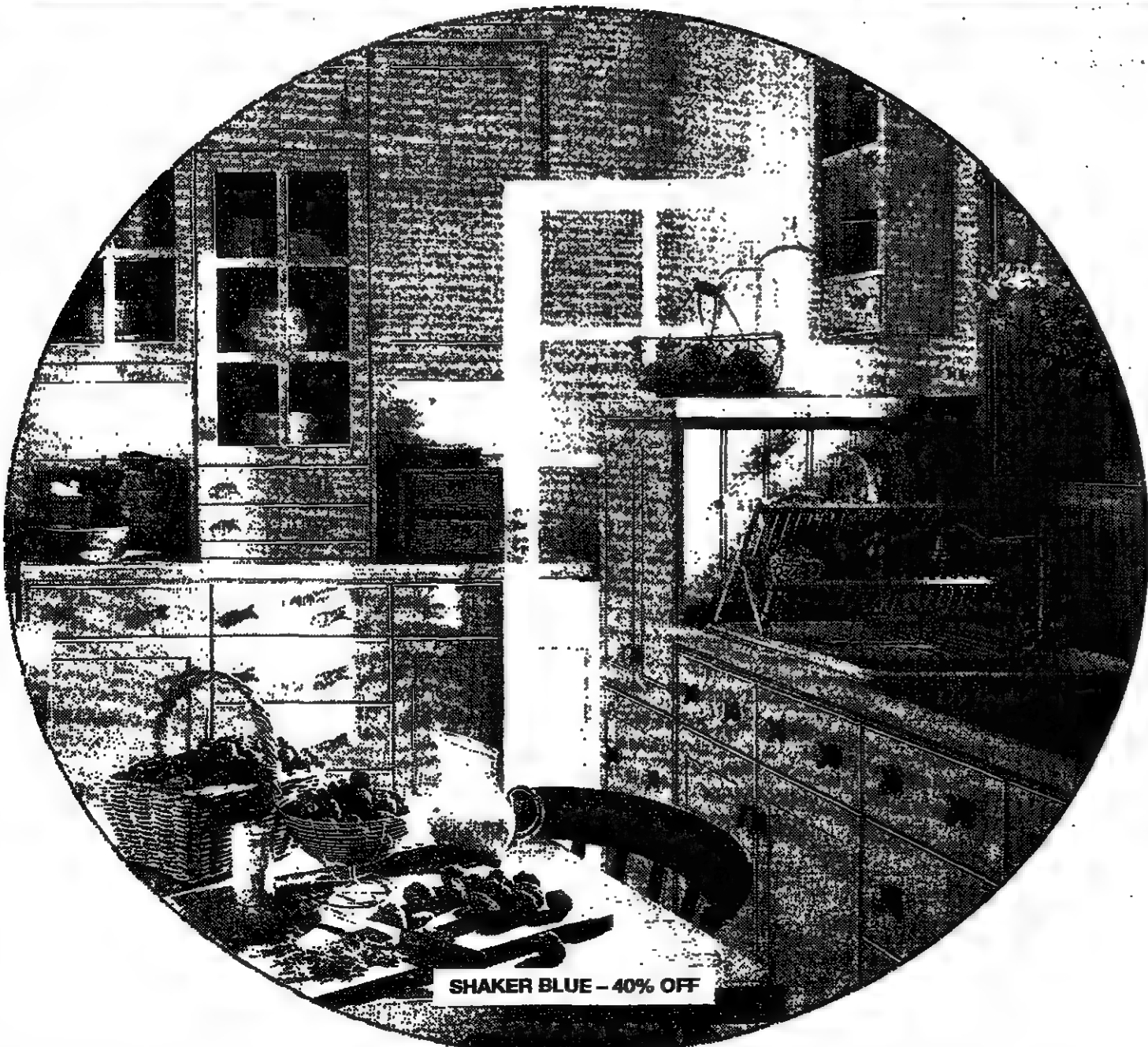
The Prince was accused of firing a rifle from his yacht, then moored off Corsica, fatally wounding a German tourist who was sleeping in a vessel near by.

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Woman says McVeigh used her soup tins to demonstrate bomb techniques



McVeigh: best man

FROM IAN BRODIE
IN WASHINGTON

TIMOTHY McVEIGH meticulously planned the Oklahoma City bombing and told the wife of an army friend that the federal building was an "easy target", the woman claimed yesterday.

Lori Fortier, 24, told a jury in Denver how Mr McVeigh once took soup tins from her kitchen cupboard and used them to demonstrate how he would stack barrels of explosive inside a rented lorry to

create the biggest impact. But she never believed he would carry out his threat. "I was in denial that he was really capable of this. I now wish I could have stopped it. If I could do it all over again, I would have."

Mr McVeigh's motive for the bombing, she said, was to avenge the FBI raid on the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas. He thought the Government had murdered people and believed some of those in the raid worked in the federal building.

Mr McVeigh, 25, pleads not guilty to the bombing in which 168 died, including nursery children.

Mrs Fortier said Mr McVeigh told her how he robbed a gun dealer to finance the bombing, stole explosives from a quarry and planned to mix ammonium nitrate with racing fuel — identified by the FBI as the bomb's ingredients. He asked for her assistance in disguising two boxes of blasting caps by wrapping them as Christmas presents. Mrs Fortier said she also helped Mr McVeigh to laminate a

false driver's licence in the name of Robert Kling, the name he allegedly used to rent the lorry.

Mrs Fortier was given immunity from prosecution in exchange for her evidence. Her husband, Michael, has negotiated a deal to testify in which he has pleaded guilty to lesser crimes as an accomplice for which he could receive a maximum sentence of 23 years. Mr McVeigh was the Fortiers' best man at their wedding.

The jury listened intently to Mrs Fortier, who described Mr

McVeigh's preparations for the bombing on at least three occasions at her mobile home in Arizona. Her credibility was expected to come under rigorous attack by the defence, but the prosecutor, Joseph Hartzer, tried to blunt the impact of her cross-examination in advance. Under his questioning, she conceded regular use of marijuana, amphetamines and LSD, but said that she stopped taking illegal drugs when she agreed to cooperate with the Government.

She admitted repeatedly lying to

the FBI after the bombing, saying that Mr McVeigh was not involved. She did so, she said, because she did not want to implicate herself or her husband after Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, made a televised pledge to seek the death penalty for those responsible for the deadliest terrorist attack on American soil.

Mrs Fortier said she knew as soon as she heard about the bombing that Mr McVeigh was involved. Asked if she felt responsible, she said: "Yes, because I could have stopped it."

Justice chief rejects call for inquiry on Democrat funding

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

JANET RENO, the US Attorney-General, yesterday rebuffed a blistering interrogation by the Senate judiciary committee over her refusal to appoint an independent counsel to investigate campaign fundraising. She said that Justice Department decisions should not be swayed by opinion polls.

Orrin Hatch, a Republican senator from Utah who is committee chairman, told her that 59 per cent of the public believed an independent counsel should be appointed. "The time has come for the Attorney-General to consider the public's scepticism about her decision", he said. Ms Reno, who has consistently said there is not enough evidence of wrongdoing by senior Administration figures to warrant such a move, said: "If I'm going to let Justice Department decisions be made on the basis of polls, then I don't want any part of it."

Ms Reno's appearance before the committee yesterday consolidated her image as an embattled figure, under siege from congressional Republicans but treated warily by Democrats. Appointed by President Clinton in his first term, Ms Reno saw her relationship with the White House cool dramatically after she

appointed an independent counsel to investigate White-water, the financial scandal dating from Mr Clinton's time as Governor of Arkansas. She has also seen her support within the Justice Department dwindle as key officials have left and the vacancies have yet to be filled.

The central issue in yesterday's Senate hearings was whether there was enough evidence to appoint an independent counsel. The Attorney-General has the power to appoint a counsel to investigate senior Administration officials such as the President who are responsible for her appointment, in order to avoid a conflict of interest.

Ms Reno said last week: "At this point, we can't find specific and credible evidence that any person with whom I would have an automatic conflict has violated a federal law."

Mr Hatch said: "I respect and admire Janet Reno. But her refusal to do what the law permits, and indeed clearly requires, does not engender respect."

Senator Patrick Leahy from Vermont, representing the Democrats on the committee, said in Ms Reno's defence: "I believe the Attorney-General has more facts and better

facts than any member of Congress."

Pressure on Ms Reno has mounted since the start of the year, as details of the Democratic fundraising practices before last November's presidential election have emerged. Republicans accuse the President and Al Gore, the Vice-President, of illegally using the White House and the advantages of their office to solicit money. They also say that the Democratic National Committee knowingly accepted foreign donations.

Newt Gingrich, House Speaker, has declared that he has no confidence in Ms Reno. "The evidence mounts every day of lawbreaking in this Administration," he said last week.

Mr Leahy said yesterday: "If we are being asked to choose between Speaker Newt Gingrich and the Attorney-General as an arbiter of ethics, my choice is very clear: I'll go with the Attorney-General."

Ms Reno said yesterday: "The standard in the law is clear and by now familiar. I am applying the law to the facts as we know them." She criticised Republican senators for long delays in considering Mr Clinton's nominations for judges, arguing that the court system was suffering.



Hutomo "Tommy" Mandala Putra, 35, and Ardhia "Tata" Pramessti Regita Cahyani Suryobandono, 22, feed each other rice during their three-hour traditional Indonesian

Suharto son tastes food of love

wedding ceremony at Jakarta's cultural theme park yesterday. The multimillionaire

groom is the youngest son of President Suharto, who told the couple before 3,500 re-

ception guests: "Be always happy together and be useful to our nation and our religion." The bride is a descendant of Javanese royalty. (AP)

Smarter beast challenges Kasparov

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

GARRY KASPAROV, the world chess champion, will resume battle with the supercomputer Deep Blue this week.

The prize for the New York match, which will start on Saturday and is being hyped as "the brain's last stand", is \$1.1 million (£680,000) — double that for the last encounter between Mr Kasparov and the machine.

The money, however, is no incentive to the whirring, flickering, 1.4-tonne International Business Machines computer. Its bloodless wires may be able to consider 200 million moves a second, but it has no appetite, no lusts and is immune to cash incentives.

Mr Kasparov beat the machine after an early scare last year in Philadelphia, but IBM programmers believe they have improved the beast, a twin black-boxed RS/6000



Garry Kasparov at his last meeting with Deep Blue

with 32 nodes and a clucking team of attendants. For months they have crouched over chess manuals and computer screens in upstate New York, tweaking their monster.

When Mr Kasparov, 34, beat Deep Blue last year the result was regarded — with ill-concealed relief among tech-

nophobes — as proof that mankind retains the upper hand over the computer world. That a rematch has been called so soon, suggests two things: that IBM is hungry for publicity, and that computer buffs will not rest easy until they have vanquished the human brain.

Each time Deep Blue plays a game its ability improves, but it may still have problems forming a deep-game strategy. Furthermore, there remains the flaw that when it comes to deciding whether to accept draws — which may sometimes be made with an element of bluffing bravado — the decision will be made by Deep Blue's highly fallible human minders.

In the last match, Mr Kasparov appeared shaken after losing the opening game, and was perhaps open to charges of initial complacency. Like last time, the six-game match will be played over nine days, and Mr Kasparov will realise that he is, for once, up against an opponent that knows no psychological weakness or physical exhaustion. To help him to concentrate on his foe, an IBM staffer will sit in the chair opposite him during the match.

Leading article, page 23

Belarus is warned on rights

Washington: The United States is resuming ambassadorial relations with Belarus after a month-long break, while telling the Government to make rapid steps to improve its "abysmal human rights record" (Bronwen Maddox writes).

The ambassador, Kenneth Yalowitz, returns to his post after a break triggered by expulsion of a US diplomat and a deteriorating human rights record. The State Department, which expelled a Belarusian diplomat in return, also cut off \$40 million (£24 million) in aid because of human rights violations.

US officials say they were encouraged by the authorities' toleration on Saturday of a march to commemorate the eleventh anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear explosion in Ukraine.

Mentally ill in US get job protection

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

AMERICAN companies have been barred from discriminating against the mentally ill and cannot now ask job applicants whether they have a history of problems including schizophrenia and manic depression.

The guidelines, issued this week by the Government's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, appear dramatically to increase the scope of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, often interpreted to apply only to those with physical handicaps.

The statement was provoked by a sharp rise in the number of complaints about discrimination on the basis of emotional or psychiatric problems, amounting to nearly 13 per cent, or 8,000, of all complaints in the past four years. The commission tells

employers to consider the fact that chronic lateness, hostility or misjudgments could be due to mental problems.

To comply with the law, companies should alter work schedules for those unable to keep to the regular timetable, and allow them extra time off work. Employers should also adapt their offices or factories, for example by installing partitions or soundproofing to help schizophrenics, or other people easily distracted.

Employers may ask an applicant to take a medical and psychiatric test, provided it is applied to all prospective recruits. If the applicant is rejected on the basis of the test, the company must demonstrate that the person would be incapable of carrying out the work, not just a disruptive or anti-social colleague.

WORLD SUMMARY

Rangers defied in Texas

Los Angeles: Hopes of a peaceful end to the west Texas siege were undermined by a stream of bellicose threats from the diehards of the Republic of Texas separatists, and by the detention of seven armed men apparently heading to reinforce the group (Giles Whittell writes).

Surrounded by scores of Texas Rangers and 26 tonnes of military hardware, the separatists have vowed that they will not surrender, adding that any attempt to take them by force will set off "the second American Civil War".

\$10m pledge

Grand Forks: An anonymous woman may be giving away \$10 million (£6.1 million) after promising \$2,000 to every affected household — about 5,000 — in this North Dakota city, ravaged by floods and fire, and neighbouring East Grand Forks in Minnesota, also swamped by the swollen Red River. The American woman has no family ties with the area, which she has never visited. (AP)

Out of jail

Hong Kong: Bao Tong, the former senior Chinese official jailed after the Tiananmen crackdown in 1989 for leaking state secrets, has been released into the custody of his family (Jonathan Mirsky writes). Mr Bao has been held on his own under effective house arrest after serving a seven-year sentence, and friends say that he and his family's flat is under close surveillance.

Chelsea's choice

Washington: Chelsea Clinton has chosen Stanford University — 3,000 miles from home — as the college where she wants to continue her studies. The US President's daughter, 17, who aims to be a medical student, had kept her choice secret. She will enter Stanford, south of San Francisco, this autumn as a member of the Class of 2001. (AP)

Patient doctored

Dubai: The United Arab Emirates has lifted a ban on the award-winning film *The English Patient* after censoring five scenes. The Ministry of Information and Culture had ruled that the film violated Islamic morals, even though it was already censored before its original release here. (Reuters)



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Iran snub to Europe halts return of envoys

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR
AND MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

EUROPEAN Union foreign ministers yesterday decided to delay indefinitely the return of their ambassadors to Tehran in solidarity with Germany, whose ambassador has been refused re-entry by Iran.

The ministers, meeting in special session in Luxembourg at Germany's request, agreed that they would not go ahead with the planned return of envoys after the announcement by Iranian leaders that the German and Danish envoys would be kept out in retaliation for the two countries' lead in advocating new sanctions against Iran.

Kelly, which acted immediately after the earlier decision on Tuesday, has already sent its ambassador back. The Foreign Office said that Jeffrey James, the British Charge d'Affaires, would stay behind in London.

In a display of wounded pride, Iran announced yesterday that the ambassadors of Germany and Denmark were not welcome back and it would not rush to return its envoys to Europe. The snub came a day after EU foreign ministers agreed to send their envoys back to Tehran, despite halting ministerial contacts because of Iran's alleged involvement in terrorism.

Iran also narrowly decided against telling Britain, which has been one of Tehran's harshest European critics, not to return Mr James, Iranian sources said.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's spiritual leader, ordered the Foreign Ministry not to allow Horst Baechmann, the German Ambassador, to return "for a period of time". Ali Akbar Velayati, the Foreign Minister, added that Iran would "not be upset if the German Ambassador never returns to Tehran, and we

may even be pleased". Other Iranian leaders accused the EU of indulging in "childish games" and "demagoguery".

Diplomats said it was the ayatollah's intervention that apparently accounted for a much tougher line. Iran's first reaction to the EU's decision on Tuesday was relatively restrained. A political commentary on Iran's state-run news agency noted with satisfaction that the EU had resisted pressure from Washington to curb trade and investment links with Iran.

The rupture in relations between Iran and Europe, its main trading partner, came after a Berlin court judgment last month that directly implicated senior Iranian leaders, including Ayatollah Khamenei and President Rafsanjani, in the murder of Kurdish dissidents in Germany. All EU members, apart from Greece, recalled their ambassadors for consultations.

Hojatollah Rafsanjani, who had predicted that European countries would send their envoys back for fear of losing trade links, accused the EU of capitulation. "The Europeans have engaged in propaganda intrigues, indulged in stubborn and childish games, have become ashamed of themselves and have quickly put their hands in the air; this is a sign of Iran's real strength," he said.

The Iranian President, a pragmatist often credited with fostering better ties with Europe to counter American attempts to isolate his country, also struggled off the EU's decision to suspend a high-level "critical dialogue" with Tehran. He said European countries should not be praising themselves for taking the step because Iran had been the first to halt the talks.

Two die as blasts sink French arms ship

FROM ADAM SAGE
IN PARIS

TWO people were killed and three were missing last night after a French Navy ship exploded and sank in the Channel.

The crew of a Royal Navy training vessel who saw the explosion alerted French rescue services. Lifeboats were sent from the nearby port of Cherbourg, northern France.

French authorities said a further five of the 22 people on board the support ship *La Fidele* were seriously injured in the accident. Their lives were not in danger, according to French rescue services.

The 450-tonne ship was transporting explosives to a live-firing exercise at sea when the explosion occurred. The French Navy said the 160ft vessel was carrying 16 crew and six civilian ordnance experts. A spokesman said that *La Fidele* was rocked by two explosions and sank within 15 minutes.

French naval vessels were last night searching for the three missing people. Solent Coastguards sent a Sikorski helicopter to the scene, but the French did not need help.

Colony's new chief to 'protect protesters'

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKEY
IN HONG KONG

HONG Kong's leader-in-waiting said here yesterday that, if China attempted a crackdown in the colony like that carried out in Tiananmen Square in 1989, he would prevent it.

Speaking on ABC Television, Tung Chee-nga said that demonstrations in Hong Kong are a "part of our culture... a way of life". When asked what would happen if Martin Lee, the chairman of the Democratic Party, attempted to breach the new laws, which forbid demonstrations without police permission, Mr Tung said: "They should feel comfortable to demonstrate... if they want to be martyrs, they will be very disappointed."

Asked what would happen if Beijing embarked on "another Tiananmen" in Hong Kong, the Chief Executive-designate said: "I will not allow it to happen here."

Mr Lee said he was happy to hear Mr Tung's assurances, but he wondered if he had the power to prevent massacres "if the troops have been given orders to shoot".



This painting is one of several discovered in a newly uncovered Second World War bunker — all daubed by bored German soldiers as they awaited the all-clear during the aerial battle over Berlin (Roger Boyes writes). Other paintings decorate a bunker near Hitler's shelter

Battle over Berlin bunkers

that housed Waffen SS drivers. A fierce debate is under way as to whether the murals — and bunkers — should be preserved as a monument or flattened. The latest bunker

find, in the Wilmsdorf district of Berlin, was once occupied by air coordination unit staff. The vivid murals, like those in the SS bunker, are of no great artistic merit but

provide an insight into the underground life of a city under bombardment. Few signs of the Third Reich remain above ground, but more bunkers and tunnels are being unearthed as builders plough up Berlin, now undergoing wholesale reconstruction.

Tajikistan's leader wounded in grenade attack

FROM RICHARD BEESTON
IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Rakhmonov of Tajikistan was wounded yesterday when a young man hurled a grenade at his entourage, killing two people and wounding 57.

The man, identified as Firdavs Dusboboyev, attacked the President, his aides

and local dignitaries in the northern Tajik city of Kokand. The President, wounded below his left knee by shrapnel, was returned to Dushanbe, the capital, for emergency talks with security advisers.

Reports from Tajikistan said it was unclear if the assassination attempt was part of a local dispute or

carried out by one of Mr Rakhmonov's many rivals. One source suggested that the incident was intended to drive a wedge between the central authorities and the northern region of Leninabad, where the attack took place.

Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, Tajikistan has been gripped by violence between rival warlords. The

conflict has so far claimed more than 30,000 lives.

While Moscow was deeply concerned by the attack, it was also trying to contain violence nearer home in the northern Caucasus. Chechen militants have been blamed for a series of bombings, kidnappings and murders.

Unidentified gunmen yesterday killed the Deputy Inte-

rior Minister of Ingushetia. Police said they had defused two bombs in Nazran, the regional capital.

The attack came after two people were killed and 30 injured on Monday when a bomb blew apart the railway station in the mountain resort of Pyatigorsk. A similar device left two people dead in nearby Armavir last week.

Albanian explosion kills 22 in arsenal

FROM REUTERS
IN TIRANA

AN EXPLOSION at an underground military weapons store killed at least 22 people yesterday, in what Albanian police said was probably a looting attempt that went wrong.

Ata, the Albanian news agency, said the death toll from the blast, close to the town of Burrel, 60 miles northeast of the capital Tirana, could rise as many witnesses reported that their relatives had been in the tunnels at the time. "All the people that were inside the store at the time were killed," a government spokesman said.

Albanian state television reported that a fire engulfed two underground tunnels and destroyed many camp buildings. The news agency quoted police as saying that the explosion was probably caused by gunpowder ignited by looters searching for artillery shells, whose brass casings have created a brisk trade in Europe's poorest nation.

The agency also reported that a fire had started on Tuesday at an arms depot in the village of Palikesh, about 75 miles south of Tirana, as locals tried to break open artillery shells to steal the casings. Nobody was injured.

Many of Albania's 1,500 arsenals were looted last month by people who lost money when pyramid saving schemes collapsed. Twenty people were hurt last week when a store in the Lezhe district exploded as youths tried to steal explosives.

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At last, HRT without the tears

Many women refuse to take hormone replacement therapy (HRT) because of the premenstrual-type syndrome it produces each cycle. Others are deterred by the slight increase in the number of cases of breast cancer in HRT users.

It is not always well received, or helpful, if a brash doctor tells a woman with breast cancer who has been on HRT that the increased risk of the disease is outweighed by her statistically lower chance of developing Alzheimer's disease, dying from cardiovascular disease (strokes and heart attacks) or suffering fractures resulting from osteoporosis.

What women want, and need, is a form of HRT which spares the breast and uterus but saves the bones, brain and heart. It is expected that at the National Osteoporosis Tri-annual Foundation meeting in Washington next month news of just such a hormonal preparation in SERM, or Selective Oestrogen Receptor Modulator, which will achieve this will be announced officially for the first time.

There has been talk at doctors' meetings for some time about SERM, and it seems that the first, Raloxifene, is likely to be marketed within 18 months.

A SERM is a mixed oestrogen agonist and antagonist. That is to say that it is thought to give the benefits of oestrogen therapy to the heart, bones and brain, while blocking any pernicious oestrogenic effects on the breast and uterus.



Dr Thomas Stuttford on a breakthrough in HRT; pain after childbirth; why you should take your calcium tablets at mealtimes

It is hoped that by using SERM both the breast and the uterus will be spared any increased liability to malignant changes, while the woman's bones remain strong and healthy, and her arteries unclogged. Surprisingly, vaginal dryness does not seem to be a problem with Raloxifene but in the occasional case which has occurred local hormonal creams have solved the problem.

SERM could provide the hormonal equivalent of having your cake and eating it, but doctors and patients will have to wait until after the data has been presented in Washington before it will be generally known just how close Raloxifene has come to achieving this ideal.

Raloxifene will be taken in a once daily dose, with or without food, at any time. Women are now living on average for seven years longer than men, and because of this increased life expectancy they have to plan to live a third of their life after the menopause.

The hormonal changes which occur at the menopause will, if not treated, result in osteoporosis. This, together with the increasing rates of cardiovascular disease in women (which is also reduced by HRT), is likely to pose increasing problems for them, and the health services in the future.

The dangers of osteoporosis are emphasised by the frequency with which the phrase "after a fall" appears in the obituary columns. It is to be expected that older women will fall more often as age erodes their sense of balance, and their sight is dimmed, but what is unacceptable is that the fall should so often result in a fracture. Fractures are too frequently a terminal event in a life which is still being enjoyed to the full.

The liability of the elderly of both sexes to break bones is mainly the result of osteoporosis, the progressive and generalised loss of bone matrix, which makes them brittle.

Although a potentially lethal fracture is the most important clinical manifestation of osteoporosis, it is not the only one. The average doctor looks after about 2,000 patients: 140 of these will be women with osteoporotic bones, 50 of whom will have the disease in their spine. At the age of 80, more than half the women who are still alive will have sustained a fracture of one of their vertebrae.

Osteoporosis of the spine is the cause of constant, sometimes crippling back ache. Sleep is disturbed, driving becomes an ordeal, carrying shopping is impossible. Vertebral collapse can be so severe that eating and drinking is difficult. I recently saw a patient with such severe kyphosis, rounded back, that drinking from a glass was so awkward that she had to have



Camilla Parker Bowles, who recently became a patron of the National Osteoporosis Society

Riddle of the kidney stones

RESEARCH in America has surprisingly shown that a high intake of dietary calcium reduces rather than increases the risk of kidney stones, which are made of calcium oxalate. Conversely, taking calcium supplements in tablet form tends to increase the incidence of such stones.

In Britain, *Pulse* magazine quotes evidence showing that of nearly 100,000 women between 34 and 50, those with the highest intake of dietary calcium had only a third the risk of developing kidney stones of those

with the lowest calcium intake. Women who took calcium tablets had a 20 per cent greater risk of stones than those who relied upon dietary supplements.

The answer seems to be that the absorption of oxalate, which is needed before stones can be formed, is reduced if calcium is taken in the diet. Calcium blocks absorption of oxalate. Women who took calcium tablets tended to do so between, rather than with, meals. This problem might be solved if they took them at mealtimes.

her sherry through a straw.

By the age of 70, the average woman has lost a third of the bone mass she had when she was fit and young. It is difficult to restore these bones to their former strength once it has been lost, but treatment does seem to reduce the rate of bone loss and thereby prevent osteoporosis from worsening. SERM may prove to be the next generation of HRT, an advance which has been long awaited by both doctors and patients.

Risk in a polio jab

ALTHOUGH Sir Julian Critchley has had other medical problems, the increasing invalidity which has prompted his resignation from the House of Commons is a result of the resurgence of the symptoms of polio. Those who suffer polio in youth are likely to become increasingly paralysed in their latter years.

The relief when a polio vaccine was introduced was immense. Before the introduction of the "sugar lump" vaccine, immunisation was provided by injections.

Recently there have been worries about a possible association between these injections and the development now of mesothelioma, a cancer of the covering of the lungs more often associated with exposure to asbestos. People who have had little or no contact with asbestos are apparently more likely to develop this cancer if they had the polio injection.

Tragic as these cases are, if they were the result of the injections which saved the life and limbs of thousands of young people in the 1950s and later, the price may have been justifiable.

The MP's downfall

THE new generation of political wife admiring her victorious husband on the platform as the returning officer announces his success should also take one last look at his immaculate suit.

After a few weeks in the Commons it is likely that unless the new Member looks after his scalp, his suit will bear a fine dust of dandruff. Usually caused by seborrheic dermatitis of the scalp, secondarily infected by a fungus, *Pityrosporum ovale*, dandruff affects more men than women.

The fungus flourishes in the warm, emotional atmosphere of the House as successfully as any former

Oxford researcher from Central Office. There are arguments as to whether the fungal infection or inflammation and scaling is the predominant cause of dandruff, but what is certain is that anti-inflammatory steroid scalp applications are inadequate to control it. Regular use of Nizoral fungicidal anti-dandruff shampoo keeps it at bay, however.

Politicians who want to retain their popularity need to do more than change the colour of their suits to hide their dandruff: 39 per cent of women said they would not fancy a dandruff sufferer, and 11 per cent of the sufferers say their social life is restricted.

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When birth brings a legacy of problems

Few subjects are more likely to cause a flood of letters to the Editor than any article on midwifery. Likewise, few topics in midwifery are more controversial than the role of the episiotomy, the cut which allows the baby's head to be delivered easily, and thereby prevents an uncontrollable tearing of the woman's perineum.

Most doctors and midwives would agree that, ideally, a tear and an episiotomy should be avoided, but it requires skill and judgment by the midwife to achieve this. Even the most experienced midwives sometimes make a mistake.

Deciding when it is wise to avoid a cut by gambling that any tear will be small and not cause damage to deeper structures is more difficult than it seems. If the wrong decision is made, the woman may be left with a battered perineum and a torn and subsequently lax and incontinent rectum. Those who favour a back-to-nature approach to midwifery often have not seen the perineums of women who have been delivered in less sophisticated societies.

The constant separating, saggy sores that many women in Third World countries suffer are often partly the result of damage caused by tearing at childbirth and are one of the reasons why HIV has spread so rapidly.

The standard teaching that an episiotomy should be done when the perineum is thick and holding up delivery, or to prevent tears or excessive stretching, has been undermined by some evidence that the repair which follows a tear is likely to cause less pain to a woman after delivery than the repair after an episiotomy.

There is also some evidence that intercourse is more likely to be painful after an episiotomy repair than after one for a tear.

In both instances it is difficult in any study to compare like with like. Not only may the nature and extent of the

tear differ, but there may be underlying personality differences between those who deliver easily and those who have needed assistance, including an episiotomy.

A review in the *British Journal of Sexual Medicine* of the problems of painful intercourse, dyspareunia, after childbirth has produced the usual forthright correspondence.

Mr Ralph Robinson, a consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, emphasised the importance of breast-feeding as a cause of dyspareunia after childbirth. He suggested that the authors of the report should have discussed what is in his opinion the most common factor in post-childbirth dyspareunia: breast-feeding.

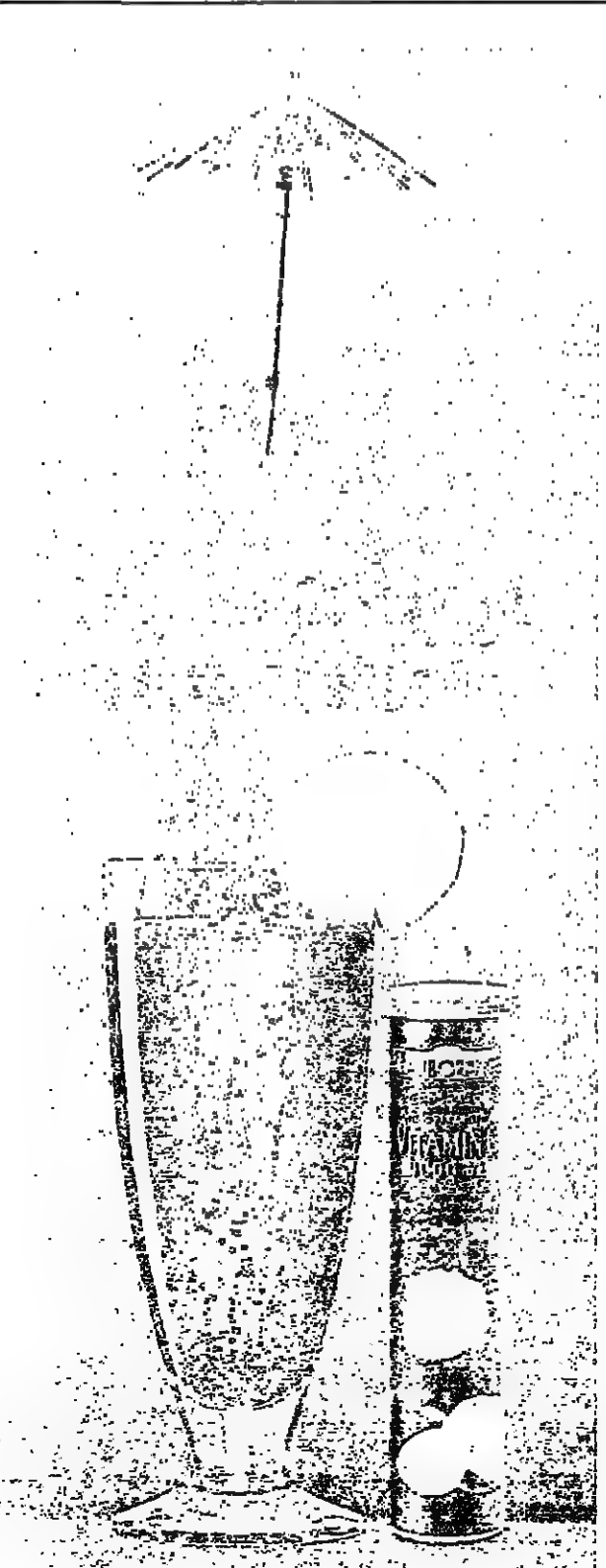
Mr Robinson said breast-feeding brought with it physiological hypoprolactinaemia, amenorrhoea, hypo-oestrogenism, atrophic vaginitis and a depressed libido.

In lay language this means that the hormonal changes induced and maintained by breast-feeding not only prevented the return of periods, which could be welcome, but also caused a loss of sexual desire, and a thinned, dry, easily inflamed vagina which may be very sensitive.

Similar vaginal changes leading to dyspareunia occur in breast-feeders even if they have had a Caesarean section, and although the symptoms may be helped with hormonal creams, these have little effect on the libido.

The authors of the initial review replied that even when they make every allowance for the type of delivery it seemed that dyspareunia was 2.5 times less common in those who had neither perineal tears nor cuts.

Their plea was that the physical causes of dyspareunia, including, presumably, breast-feeding, should be explored before a psychological reason was assumed.



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A Likely Lad's solo voyage

More than 20 years after he first found fame, Rodney Bewes is rediscovering himself. Interview by Noreen Taylor

Rodney Bewes paces his dressing room nervously. His period boating costume suggests languorous riverside pleasures, but he shows not the least sign of leisure. Just the opposite. He gives every impression of extreme anxiety.

He is clearly a fussy sort, fastidious, worrying even about the contents of his dressing table. Is everything where it should be? In the circumstances, perhaps it isn't so surprising that the erstwhile Likely Lad is so apprehensive. In his latest stage role, everything rests on his shoulders. Everything. "Yes," he says proudly. "I've done it all myself."

For once, the phrase "one-man show" is truly apposite. The programme states baldly: "Rodney Bewes in his solo adaptation of Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men in A Boat*."

In fact he is starring in, producing and directing the 90-minute monologue. He has written the script. He is supervising the lighting, providing the music and organising the props, which include a rather handsome Edwardian skiff and a stuffed dog named Montmorency. He is also road manager. And if that isn't quite enough, he even entertains the audience after the show.

Backstage at the Ashcroft Theatre, Croydon, Bewes explains: "At the end I invite the audience on stage. People are fascinated by the boat. Then we all have drinks in the bar afterwards. I tell them I can't get started till the crew come. Kidding, of course."

"Tonight, my wife Daphne is coming to help. She'll start packing up the car while I'm in the bar."

Now 60, and slimmer than in his *Likely Lads* days, he still has that naive optimism that defined his TV character. Holding up the programme, bursting with pride, he says: "Look at this first act, second act, entire cast list, all a joke you see. Lovely though."

So why is he doing it, lugging all this stuff around provincial theatres? Isn't it all rather depressing after decades of fame when he and James Bolam were the nation's favourite Northerners?

"Oh, let's be honest," he says. "I'm enjoying myself. Loving it. At the Edinburgh Festival last August one of the posh papers described me as a worn cardigan at a Gaudier show. Brilliant! Just because I'm enjoying myself."



The way they were: with James Bolam in *The Likely Lads*

though, doesn't justify people buying tickets. So it's got to work.

Travelling alone, being out there on my own, it's mega lonely. The first few steps on stage are the worst, though I think Jerome would have understood and, hopefully, approved. It's a Jeronian kind of thing, you see. He came from Walsall, from a working-class background like my own, so I try not to speak in a different accent."

More than half the 800 seats at Croydon were filled with a warmly appreciative audience, all chortling along as Bewes read and enacted the 40 pages he had culled from Jerome's book. His adaptation is set in 1912, with Jerome as narrator recalling a Thames trip taken with friends George and Harris. Rodney plays all three characters with a comic timing Jack Benny might have envied.

But his career does seem upside down. Fame came early and now here he is in the provinces. "I don't regret anything," he says. "The Sixties were a wonderful time to be on television. I'm just thrilled and happy that I was part of it. Bob Ferris was a wonderful character to play, very me in a way."

"You see, the writers Dick Clements and Ian La Frenais were people who knew a beginning, a middle and an end. They are big-

time writers in Hollywood now." Bewes has always concentrated on comedy. After the last series of *The Likely Lads* in 1975 he produced and presented Basil Brush, as well as writing and starring in another comic series *Dear Mother ... Love Albert*.

James Bolam, meanwhile, has taken the hard drama route of television classics such as *When The Boat Comes In* and *The Belderbecke Trilogy*. "I keep in touch with most of the cast. We were a mutual admiration society, James Bolam and I, never enemies, although everyone tried to make out we were, just like they tried to make out that Morecambe and Wise couldn't stand each other."

"I'm very lucky, a very fulfilled man. All my children's friends' parents have split up and yet Daphne and I are as happy as ever. I wake up every morning in gratitude. When our children come home they know Daphne and Rodney are still there. We have four children, three of them triplets."

"Now that they've grown up, Daphne has time to do something she's always been passionate about, painting. We have more time for each other anyway. We've always given each other space,

and that enriches relationships. After years of being a housewife, Daphne, who used to be head buyer in Biba's, began a BA degree course. She's in her last year now and in a bit of a state because they want her to do essays and she wants to know what that's got to do with painting."

He often reflects on the strange turning his life has taken. "Was I a strolling player in another century? That's something that has always fascinated me. Of course I wonder. Then I look at the others who must have asked themselves the same questions. Albert Finney, son of a bookie's runner, Tom Courtenay whose father worked in a shipyard. Explain that? I can't."

Much of Bewes's childhood was spent in bed, as an asthmatic invalid. "I used to lie in my bedroom, making stages out of shoe boxes. I'd fill them up with tissue and shine a lamp inside." He was 12 when he saw a BBC advert in his father's *Daily Herald* for child actors. The confident boy wrote asking for an audition and ended up working on several *Children's Hour* plays.

"My family were so thrilled when I stopped being ill and won a RADA scholarship, they allowed me to go and live on my own in London. I washed up in the Grosvenor House kitchens and that paid for my flat in Belsize Park."

"I think we all act in different ways. Sometimes it's easier being someone else. I remember when the triplets were born and I stood looking down at them and Daphne, and said: 'Well done. What a blessing.'"

"She snapped back: 'What are you talking about? What a blessing? Who are you now, anyway? You sound like Leslie Howard bringing in a crippled destroyer from Dunkirk.' I do that sometimes, I become a different person, without thinking about it. Daphne's very down to earth, keeps me on my feet."

"The turning point came for me last year when I decided that the world would not have been a poorer place without *The Likely Lads* and that I wasn't very important. Just because you're an actor doesn't mean you have to have an enormous ego. Learning to believe that has made me a much happier man."

● Rodney Bewes's solo adaptation of Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men in A Boat* is on tour. Details: 0891 455 485.

The maths of modern marriage

Marry for love, but never forget the balance sheet, says Rachel Morris

Lately I have been struggling with sums that are way beyond my mathematical abilities. I am not talking here about my tax return, but about the terrible mathematics of a modern marriage.

Nineteenth-century novels

abound with parents advising their children to marry wisely. Sons would be told to avoid flighty girls with expensive tastes in jewellery and to settle down instead with good, domesticated women. And daughters would be told to balance a little romantic love with a great deal of steady consideration of a young man's fortunes.

But those were the days when the sums that underlay a marriage were known and agreed by everyone. When Mrs Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* heard that Elizabeth was to marry Darcy, she cried: "Dear, dear Lizzy. A house in town. Everything that is charming. Ten thousand a year. Oh Lord, I shall go quite distracted", and no one spoils her joy by arguing with her sums. But since then huge changes have taken place in the way that money is earned, the highest of which is that these days one person's salary, unless he/she is very well-paid, does not make a marriage. The other great change is that women are earning

more and men are earning less. Two people into one salary simply doesn't go.

Jane Austen and Mrs Bennet would turn in their graves if they could see my friends. For marriages based upon sound financial considerations have always been very few and far between in the circles where I move, and the idea of loving where your interests lie is about as much understood by us as is the Eskimo language. In fact, I don't know anyone who will confess to having married for money. But now that a marriage in credit is as rare as a primrose in winter, we can expect money to become a driving force in fiction again.

Rich and desirable men may stalk the pages of serious fiction, as they always used to do, and — who knows? — a novel may soon be published which begins: "It is a truth, universally acknowledged, that a man earning more than £100,000 a year must be in search of a wife."

Ella and the Mothers by Rachel Morris is published by Scribner

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(T1A/706)

The crisis Germany is not facing

Roman Herzog says *Angst* is paralysing the nation he leads

I have just returned from Asia, where in many countries an amazing dynamism prevails. States which until recently were considered to be developing countries will soon have catapulted themselves into the top league of 21st-century industrial states. Bold visions of the future are conceived and acted on, encouraging people to ever greater achievements.

What, by contrast, do I see in Germany? Here the mood is overwhelmingly despondent and the talk is all of crisis. A feeling of paralysis pervades our society.

At the same time, we face the greatest economic and social challenges for 50 years: 4.3 million unemployed; the erosion of social security by the upside-down pyramid of an ageing population; and the economic, technical and political challenge of globalisation. Let us not deceive ourselves: anybody who still thinks all this has nothing to do with him personally has his head in the sand.

What is the matter with our country? In short, it is the loss of economic dynamism, the ossification of society, an unbelievable mental depression. These phrases describe the crisis. Compared to the Asian tigers or — for some years, now once again — the United States, the German economy has performed feebly. Furthermore, in America and Asia the production cycles are becoming ever shorter, while the tempo of change grows ever faster. Nor is it just a question of technical innovation and the ability to transform research more rapidly into new products. It is a question of a new industrial revolution, of the new, global society of the information age. The comparison between us and America, with its buoyant labour market, proves the point: Germany is in serious danger of falling behind.

Whoever shows initiative here, and above all whoever wants to strike out in a new direction, is in danger of being suffocated by a mountain of well-meaning regulations. To grasp the extent of the German regulatory mania, one has only to attempt to build an ordinary family house. Although wages are similar in The Netherlands, it is much cheaper to build the same house there, because of Germany's extra costs.

And this bureaucratic mentality doesn't only obstruct anybody who wants to build himself a house; it obstructs entrepreneurs, large and small, and most especially it obstructs anyone reckless enough to want to start a business in Germany. Bill Gates started off in a garage and as a young man he found himself running a multinational company. Some say bitterly that here in Germany his garage workshop would have been closed down by the health and safety inspectors.

And this loss of economic dynamism goes hand in hand with the ossification of our society. People here sense that the growth to which we had become accustomed has failed.

There are those who hope — and indeed expect — that she will follow the example of Violet Atlee, Margot Asquith and Lady Dorothy Macmillan and stay out of sight. "My hunch," says a senior source in the party, "is that she will not go along with Tony."

Buckingham Palace staff believe that the spouses of Prime Ministers-in-waiting have no business at the Palace on the first day. They embarrass royal officials, who do not quite know what to do with them while the new boss does business with Her Majesty, other than offer them tea and the lower grade of Palace biscuits.

Harold Wilson took his reluctant wife Mary along to the Palace in October 1964 in an attempt to boost his folksy image. Palace footmen were mortified.

Since then, Audrey Callaghan, Denis Thatcher and Norma Major have all traipsed along behind their victorious partners. "The

and they react to this, understandably enough, with uncertainty. For the first time, even those who have never been threatened with unemployment are gripped by an existential *Angst* about themselves and their families. Newsweek magazine has already spoken of "the German sickness". That is an exaggeration. But this much is true: anybody who looks at our media today cannot avoid the impression that our general mood is pessimism.

That is terribly dangerous. *Angst* all too easily misleads us into the reflex attempt to preserve everything at all costs. An *Angst*-ridden society is incapable of reform and thereby of shaping the future. *Angst* paralyses the spirit of invention, the courage to be self-sufficient, the hope that problems can be solved. Our German word *Angst* has entered the vocabularies of the Americans and the French as a symbol of our state of mind. "Courage" or "self-confidence", by contrast, seem to be out of fashion.

So our real problem is a mental one: it is not as though we did not know how urgently we need to modernise our economy and our society, but progress is tortuously slow. We lack zest for renewal, the willingness to take risks, to abandon well-trodden paths, to dare to do something new. I believe that our problem lies not in recognising what has to be done, but in trans-

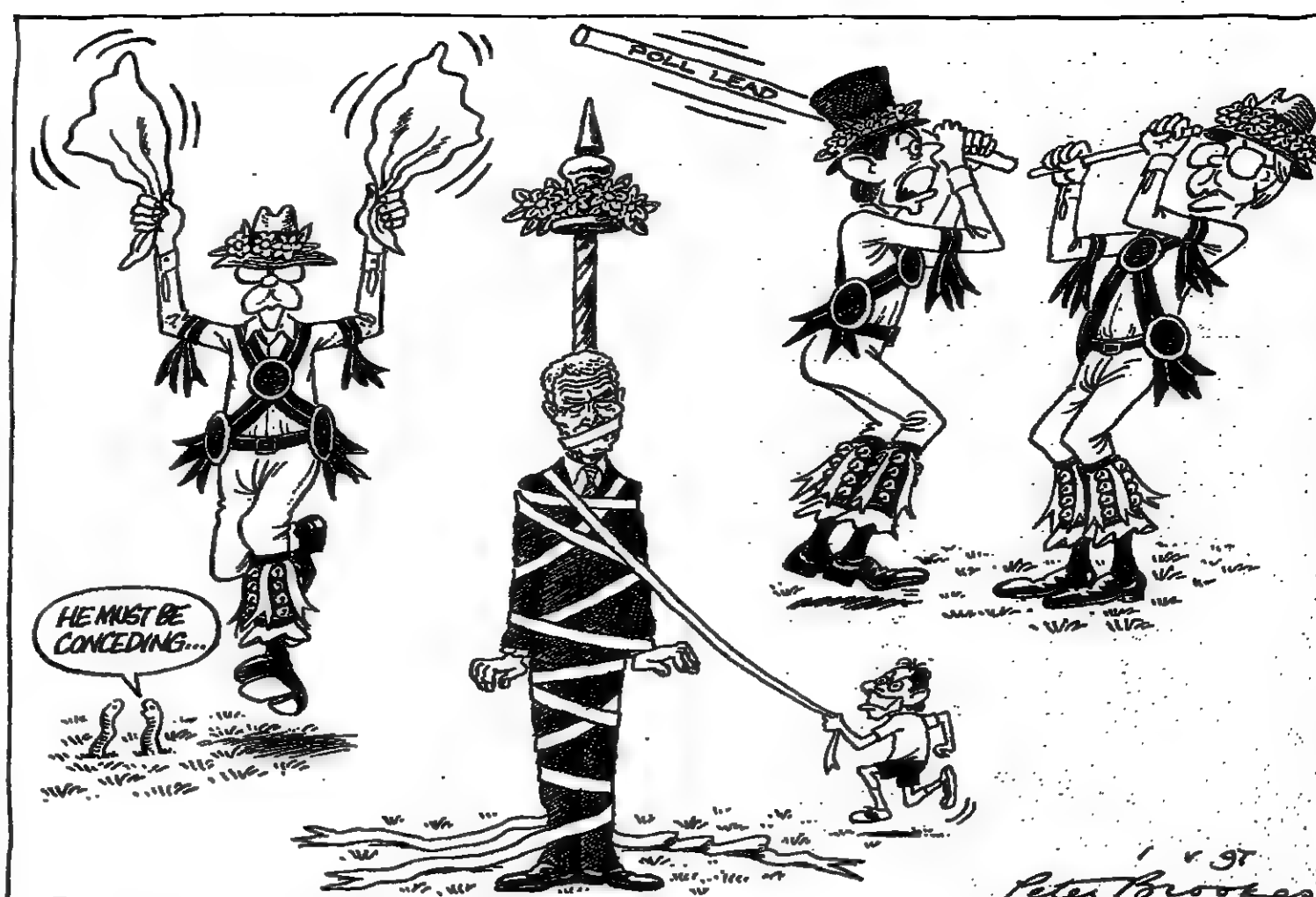
lating that knowledge into action. While the effects of technological change on the labour market and the consequences of demography for welfare also afflict other industrial states, such as Japan, there are no extenuating circumstances for Germany's failure to modernise. That problem is home-made, and we have only ourselves to blame.

We are behaving as if we had plenty of time for renewal. On taxation, pensions, health, education — even the euro — one hears only the voices of the interest groups and the doubters. All the political parties and social forces lament the great problem of unemployment. If they really mean what they say, I expect them now to act quickly and decisively. I appeal for more resolution. We cannot afford to let our political institutions blockade themselves.

What I find lacking in our elites — political, economic, media and social — is the capacity and the will, not just to agree on what is right but to see it through. One may have to face down opposition from public opinion, but our country is not in a condition to afford the luxury of pursuing the line of least resistance.

The world is in turmoil: it will not wait for Germany. But it is not yet too late.

The author is the President of the German Federal Republic and was formerly chief justice in the Constitutional Court. This is an extract from his controversial speech in Berlin on April 26.



MAYPOLLING DAY

Safety first won't do

To win, the Tories needed a simple message of hope; they never found one

It is likely to be an exciting evening. Paddy Ashdown, a Somerset MP, has said that there have never been so many undecided voters so late in a campaign. I think that is true, and there may never have been so many marginal seats. Early in the campaign I wrote about Somerset, and concluded that seven of the nine seats were too close to call. That has been confirmed in the case of Taunton and Bridgwater by constituency polls in last Sunday's *Observer*. My own canvassing in Fife found a surprising number of genuinely undecided voters, and my son Jacob tells me that this has continued in the last days of the campaign. The whole electorate is less pre-committed than it used to be. The Conservatives and Labour may retain 20 per cent of the electorate each as a hard core vote; perhaps the Liberal Democrats have 10 per cent; but half the voters have no strong party loyalty, and for a large number polling day is the moment of decision.

There is also a contradiction between the polls and the canvassing returns. I think that Labour canvassers are telling the truth when they say that they expect to win but not by a landslide. I know from family experience on the ground and from a number of telephone calls, that the Tory canvassers across the country show the same thing: a Labour victory, but not a landslide. People who say they voted Conservative in 1992 but who are now voting Labour are still relatively rare. Certainly not common enough to account for the polls' average drop of more than a quarter in Conservative support. The polls are showing something quite different from the doorstep canvas: a Labour majority of 200 or more.

There are now 659 seats, which means that either party has to win 330 seats to have an overall majority. My judgment is that Labour has already passed that point, and probably has about 350 seats in the bag, which would give a majority of more than 40. The Conservatives can rely on only about half the seats they would need for an overall majority, or about 165; the other parties will take about 45 seats. That leaves approximately 110 seats as the real marginals of this election. From the Labour point of view, these are the 100 seats which could take Labour up from 350 to 450, and take the majority up from 40 to 240. From the Tory point of view, they represent the potential difference between the core

165 seat and 265, and between a landslide and a modest Labour victory. The poll suggests that Labour will win most of these seats, the canvas suggests that the Conservatives will hold on to most of them. Labour's lead in the polls has now lasted for three or four years, from the time when Britain was forced out of the exchange-rate mechanism. Since Tony Blair became leader, it has been stable and solid. The damage of the 1990s recession, followed by a forced devaluation and higher taxes, almost destroyed the Government's reputation for competence. Tony Blair's conversion of his party to new Labour has made it much more attractive to floating voters, and this combination of factors made a big Labour victory probable long before the election came.

The campaign itself, on both sides, can be judged in terms of these truly marginal seats, the 100 seats below 265 which the Conservatives will either hold or lose tonight. If John Major has managed to keep 250 seats or more, it will have been a successful campaign: if he holds 200 seats or fewer, it will have been a disaster. Probably the end result will be somewhere between these two figures.

I am not sure that it will have done the Liberal Democrats much good, but Paddy Ashdown has come closest of the three party leaders to his campaign objectives. He has argued the main Liberal Democrat points consistently and has established them in the public mind. Tony Blair will not necessarily worry about any shortcomings of his campaign, because he will have won. Nevertheless, it has left a disappointing impression on many people. New Labour has come across in the past six weeks as slick rather than compassionate. There was too much evidence of Peter Mandelson's spin-doctoring skills, and too inflexible a discipline, particularly on Europe. Labour's European policy is neither coherent nor popular. The Liberal Democrat attack on the contradiction between priority for

health and education and very tight control on expenditure was never rebutted. Tony Blair himself, on the other hand, came across personally as open-minded and persuasive.

The more difficult *post mortem* will be the one on the Conservative campaign, even if they do better than expected. It has failed in several ways. The Tory trump cards were not played successfully. Their strongest issue was the economy. The case was put pitifully by Hans-Olaf Henkel, the head of the German Confederation of Industry, in an interview with Roger Boyes in yesterday's *Times*. "Other European countries are in a logjam, unable to move forward quickly. For them the traffic lights are on amber, but for Britain the economy is coasting through on a wave of green lights — unemployment is sinking from month to month, net income is rising, public borrowing is down."

The Conservatives could have benefited from the swing of public opinion towards British independence and against the single currency. The "wait and see" policy has been a disaster: it turned off many voters. The Referendum Party may cost the Tories only 2 per cent of the vote, or something like that, but even 2 per cent could mean 15 seats, or 30 off the Labour majority. A commitment not to enter the single currency in the next Parliament would have given heart to the whole Conservative campaign; it would have forced Labour to consider a similar commitment; it would also have been right. In the event, the Conservative policy on Europe was incoherent, partly rescued by more than 300 candidates taking the matter into their own hands. The growth of public Euroscepticism on the doorstep has been one of the most under-reported developments of this campaign. Experienced canvassers have summed up what they have found: "Regardless of party, about 40 per cent are against the single currency, and about another 40 per cent want

to get out of Europe altogether."

The Atlee victory of 1945, the Thatcher victories of 1979, 1983 and 1987, and the Reagan victories of 1980 and 1984 all combined a simple message with hope for the future. If you cannot write down your party's programme on the back of a postcard, and look happy when you read out what you have written, you will not have a great campaign. Tony Blair does offer hope, but his programme has been opaque, a carefully modulated "me too". The Tory appeal has been "safety first", the slogan on which Stanley Baldwin lost the 1929 election. However vague, the Labour campaign seemed more forward-looking. I'm afraid that "me too" beats "safety first", however feeble they both are as campaign themes.

More solid, though still defensive, was John Major's personal attack on Labour's constitutional proposals. As the Prime Minister who signed the Maastricht treaty, he may not be convincing when he says that he is against British independence being given up in further European integration; but he is convincing as the defender of the United Kingdom against Scottish devolution with its threat of break-up. He has expressed this argument in two general elections with conviction and force.

John Major has also shown admirable personal courage. Previous Conservative leaders, including Ted Heath and Margaret Thatcher, had only too many critics on the doorstep. Canvassers would come reeling back to their offices after disturbances against "that man" or "that woman". They never hear such personal hostility to John Major, and there is much respect and affection. He may say this is a loser but he is a well-liked man.

It will be strange if there is a landslide. Canvassers have been hearing surprisingly little anger against the Conservatives and equality of little optimism about new Labour. I can remember 1945, the big Labour landslide; Labour voters were then full of anger against the Tories and full of confidence in Labour. It was quite different. If the Tories had defined their position on the single currency as more than 300 candidates have now done, and forced a similar definition out of Labour, I think they might even have won. But in the absence of an overriding issue, "time for a change" has been decisive. A party that has to come from behind needs a horse to ride. There has been no horse.

William Rees-Mogg

First blossom

FOR CHERIE BOOTH, the real decision tomorrow will not concern what designer outfit to wear for the afternoon trip to Buckingham Palace if Tony Blair becomes Prime Minister — but whether she should go to the Palace at all.

There are those who hope — and indeed expect — that she will follow the example of Violet Atlee, Margot Asquith and Lady Dorothy Macmillan and stay out of sight. "My hunch," says a senior source in the party, "is that she will not go along with Tony."

Buckingham Palace staff believe that the spouses of Prime Ministers-in-waiting have no business at the Palace on the first day. They embarrass royal officials, who do not quite know what to do with them while the new boss does business with Her Majesty, other than offer them tea and the lower grade of Palace biscuits.

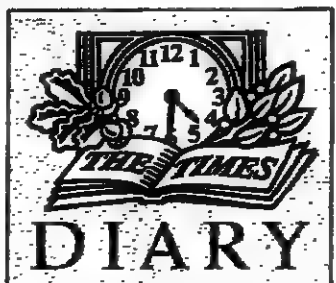
Harold Wilson took his reluctant wife Mary along to the Palace in October 1964 in an attempt to boost his folksy image. Palace footmen were mortified.

Since then, Audrey Callaghan, Denis Thatcher and Norma Major have all traipsed along behind their victorious partners. "The

spouses are not involved with the business side of things," says the Palace, "but they can see the Queen after the meeting is over. It is a matter of personal choice." Despite Palace sentiment and her independent manner, Cherie Booth will perhaps find the opportunity to impress Her Majesty from the start simply impossible to resist.



Cherie: what to do?



● Extravagant plans to celebrate election night with fireworks at Canary Wharf have been abandoned on safety grounds by the Mirror. It had hoped to launch £10,000-worth of blue, red and yellow rockets, and to top off the night with a spectacle in red featuring a grinning Tony Blair. "It was deemed too dangerous," says the Editor, Piers Morgan.

Hoop-la

IN THE SKY above John Major's home in Great Stukeley today, a pilot with a bi-plane hopes to inspire voters to plump for the man. He plans to draw a smiling face in the sky while performing a couple of victorious loop-the-loops.

More Biggles than Ginger, the anonymous pilot first caught the attention of the public when he

buzzed Sandringham at Christmas and painted one of his happy faces above its lawns: "I am doing it over John Major's home because I don't know where Blair lives — and because I am a Tory," he shouts. "I've got to do it now because it would probably have to be a sad face on Friday."

Maidens over

PITY the man who is forced to field a team for the Lords and Commons cricket team on polling day. The task has fallen to Lord Green.



"I'm returning this: it doesn't work"

way's brother, Mervin Greenway, for the annual tussle against a challenging Roodeen girls' XI.

On Tuesday, when the team played Westminster School and secured a draw, not a Commons could be found, although Sir Nicholas "Scotch" Scott pulled on his pads for an elegant turn at the wicket.

Reigning little interest in the election after being ousted from his seat in favour of Alan Clark, he will be playing again today. A tip for the girls: one mention from your wicketkeeper of Kensington and Chelsea should put him off his stroke.

Hard pressed

ON THE EVE of the election, John Major appeared to be cross with the press. Visiting London's Docklands on Tuesday, he was trailed by the best of the British media, who faithfully reported his speech. While they were still writing, however, he sped off back to central London, and so did his press bus. Nearly 20 journalists were left stranded in Docklands, a community which may well be the Tory dream but isn't a place to be dumped in late at night.

● Those on the trail of the most exclusive of election-night parties



Lady Sarah: where to go?

should keep an eye on where Lady Sarah Chatto heads this evening. Today, the delightful daughter of Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon celebrates her 33rd birthday, and is said to be planning dinner in west London — with not a politician in sight. "It would be preposterous to divulge what she's doing," says her father Lord Snowdon, a master of discretion. "Birthdays are private affairs."

Forsyth's forthright finale

Magnus Linklater on a Tory still needed in Scotland

It was a moment to savour: political debate at its rawest, on the eve of an election which could bring the protagonist's career shuddering to a halt. Michael Forsyth had just stepped off the platform from which he had delivered his final endorsement of the Union. He was returning to Stirling, where he still had a few hours left to fight for his desperately vulnerable seat. But hearing voices raised in the hall, he could not resist turning back. For the next ten minutes, with passion and precision, he argued his case, perhaps for the last time, with the journalists who have harried him for much of his 14 years in Scottish politics.

This was not so much electioneering as instinct, the beliefs of a man who has, if nothing else, lent much-needed colour to a monochrome political landscape. It is a measure of his contribution that when the debate ended (as robustly as it had begun), one reporter, to whose lips the very word Forsyth once brought foam, commented: "We're going to miss him." And it's true. Without him, the all-important constitutional issue in Scotland would have been a lacklustre affair, with Labour avoiding it whenever possible, and thorny questions left unresolved. He has explored the problems they have dodged, and if he does go he will at the very least have put them on the agenda, for others to raise again. He has pursued the anomalies of devolution, pointed out the risks, quantified the costs, and coined the most famous phrase of all, "the tartan tax".

Yesterday he produced confidential figures from his own civil servants, showing how much the Treasury would like to cut from Scotland's budget. He knows this kind of thing is in breach of all the rules, but, as he said, "this is not a game any longer — this is serious". With one day to go, he was prepared to use any resource at his command to press his message.

It is not for lack of trying that his message will be ignored by the voters. Tomorrow, the political map of Scotland is likely to show the reduction of the Conservatives north of the border to the level of a rump party. Far from closing the gap, as most commentators (including me) expected, they have been slipping back. Scottish voters want change. They are no longer interested in the minutiae of a debate which they have heard replayed *ad nauseam*. That can wait, they believe, until after the election. But now, they just want to get on with the process of reform.

The indications are that not only Forsyth, but Ian Lang and possibly Malcolm Rifkind could lose their seats (the Foreign Secretary is said to be hanging on "by his fingertips" in Edinburgh Pentlands). Other ministers, such as Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, are under threat too.

If the Tories are reduced to just four or five seats, it will be bad news not just for them, but for Scotland. A healthy opposition party is going to be vital over the next few months as Labour's referendum Bill on devolution is debated. And later, in the run-up to a Scottish parliament, itself, the acerbic and pointed questioning of a Michael Forsyth would help to keep the government on its toes and to ensure that when home rule is finally delivered, we end up with an efficient and workable scheme. Best of all, would be for the new parliament to have Mr Forsyth as a member, which would greatly increase its entertainment value. What- ever one's view of his politics, there is no doubting his commitment to Scotland and his understanding of its dynamics. He has often made himself unpopular by asking inconvenient questions, but they have usually been questions that needed asking.

In the immediate future, however, that is unlikely to happen. The Scottish Secretary has already ruled himself out as a participant in what he has brusquely dismissed as "a pigmy parliament". His sights are on larger targets. If he is defeated, he is likely to pick up the threads of a business career before seeking nomination for a safe Tory seat in the south. In a largely Eurosceptic party, his credentials for selection, and promotion are excellent (his parting gift yesterday was: "You'll see no European flag here..."). He is a future contender for the leadership, and at the age of 42, he has a big political career in front of him. He will leave a sizeable gap. Neither Malcolm Rifkind, who might return to his legal career, nor Ian Lang, who might head for the Lords, seems likely to relish the cut and thrust of political life in a Scottish parliament. Meanwhile, the loss of its biggest guns will leave the Scottish Tories with some soul-searching. Regaining ground will take time, but it is not impossible, and help is being offered from an unexpected quarter. The Shadow Secretary of State, George Robertson, set out his vision for a Scottish parliament only last week. He pointed out that the plans offered both Tories and Scottish Nationalists an opportunity to participate on even terms with Labour. They would enjoy a status and representation in Scotland far more prominent than under the present system. It would be healthy for everyone, if they did so. And if that transpired, who knows, it might even tempt back Mr Forsyth. Every oyster needs its grain of sand.

P.H.S

VOTE WITH RELISH

For today, indifference should be off the table

This is the day on which the tables are turned — not Labour against Tory but the government against the voters. On this day politicians, from the Prime Minister downwards, are our servants not our masters. Those many Britons who have experienced job insecurity in the past five years can enjoy watching the same fear of redundancy flitting over the faces of politicians. MPs have had to resign their jobs and reapply — and many are rightly anxious.

Anyone who has ever railed against the arrogance of politicians should savour this moment and vote with relish. All those who have ever shouted at the television screen should use their political voice today. Politicians may often act as if they cared little about the opinions of the many. Polling day is our only chance to fight back. It is accountability in action.

A vote is the most precious right that a citizen possesses, a right for which millions have died. Women in Britain have had it for only 69 years. Memories are truly short when so many can disdain the sufferings of the suffragettes who gave their lives for that vote. Apartheid in South Africa could be maintained only because blacks were deprived of the right to vote. The sight of those shuffling queues for polling stations, packed with blacks and whites alike, patiently waiting for hours in the heat and dust, will be an enduring memory of this decade. The sacrifice and dignity with which they won the vote should be a severe rebuke to those in Britain today who cannot be bothered to tick a box.

Not to vote in this, or any, election is not a statement. It is a failure. Politicians learn nothing from abstentions. They take notice only of the percentage of votes cast. To claim

that the parties are all alike is also a delusion. Whatever the policy convergence of the past few years, there are still stark differences between the parties and between their candidates. No voter can expect an exact fit between personal beliefs and party manifestos. But one template will surely match a little better than another. The difference, however small, should be enough to earn a vote.

Voting is a civic duty, and all the more so when the transfer of power is at stake. Usually voters lend governments power for five years and expect it back intact at the end of the term. But in the past two Parliaments, power that was merely on loan to politicians has been given away irredeemably to Brussels. This is a principle about which all voters should feel aggrieved. "When moral principles, rather than persons, are candidates for power, to vote is to perform a moral duty, and not to vote is to neglect a duty." Thus spoke Thomas Paine; thus is the truth today.

Between this election and the next, the principle of the single currency, with all the loss of sovereignty that it entails, may be decided upon. Those of our readers who care more about this momentous choice than about any other issue should express their will at the ballot box by using our guide to sceptical voting on page 11.

Some of our readers will use the guide for opposite effect because they are in favour of greater integration. Some will vote for principles, some for parties and some for people. However they vote, the action itself will have been worthwhile. The ballot paper may be marked in enthusiasm, in fury or in resignation. But the one emotion that should be absent for this one day is indifference.

PHONEY WAR

Car phones are here to stay but they should be hands-off

The call by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents for a ban on drivers using mobile phones deserves extensive examination and debate. It has the support of road safety experts, including representatives from the Department of Transport, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the motoring industry. And it follows two recent cases in which a driver was found guilty of causing an accident while using his mobile phone.

The society found what is increasingly obvious to anyone who has seen drivers with a phone to one ear, swerving, cutting corners and braking dangerously: concentration is reduced, normal reaction time slowed and control of the car impaired when a driver is in animated conversation with only one hand on the steering wheel. Both hands are needed to steer while indicating, changing gear or turning on wipers.

There are other ways of jeopardising safety while driving — inserting tapes, lighting a cigarette or turning round to reproach children — but those who, in addition, cradle a telephone on their shoulder while overtaking on the motorway are courting disaster. There are as yet no definitive statistics on accidents caused by phone use, but a Canadian study suggests that they are 20 per cent more likely among those using mobile phones.

The law at present does not specifically ban the use of phones, but it gives police wide-ranging powers to act against anyone driving without due care and attention. In practice, that allows them to pull over phone users and caution or charge them. A new law banning phones from cars altogether

would be impractical and unnecessary. But much can be done within the existing law. In particular, courts should treat phone use, like alcohol, as a clear contributory cause to an accident. Fines could be increased, drivers banned from the road and police and insurers would find it easier to attribute blame in an accident. A road culture could be inculcated that would regard phone use as unacceptable as intoxication or driving without seat belts.

RoSPA argues that all phone conversations are a distraction. Cars, it says, should not be regarded as mobile offices. In an age when executives waste hours in traffic jams, such sentiments will fall on deaf ears. An initial compromise, therefore, might be to insist that only hands-off phones should be permitted.

Phone users insist that making a call is no more dangerous than speaking to a passenger or listening to the radio. They are wrong. Drivers — and passengers — tend to pause in conversation if road conditions demand sudden concentration. They can listen to the radio with only half an ear. But when telephoning they are likely to be far more distracted, imagining themselves in a different environment, concentrating on what are usually weightier and more demanding conversations and unable to fall silent at crucial moments.

Road accidents have been falling steadily over the years and Britain now has one of the most enviable records in Europe. No one should want this aid to personal freedom and improved communication to reverse road safety trends and claim more innocent lives.

DEEP MYSTERY

Kasparov takes humanity's side against the computer

Men live in uneasy truce with their machines. We like to see them as obedient servants: the word "robot" derives from the term for a peasant labour service in the feudal Holy Roman Empire. But, like any master, we secretly fear our mechanical slaves. From the fantastical fictions of Rabbi Loew's Golem and Frankenstein's monster to the modern reality of this silicon century, the ghost in the machine still makes our flesh creep. And inside most of us there is a little bit of a Luddite waiting to get out.

On Saturday the World Chess Champion, Garry Kasparov, will begin his second six-game match against the computer Deep Blue. Last year, after losing the first game, Kasparov took the series 4-2. Since then, Deep Blue has doubled its calculating capacity from 500 million to a billion positions a second. Such is the complexity of chess, however, that even this increase probably amounts only to a modest extension of the computer's vision. Perhaps more usefully, the Deep Blue team will have benefited from the advice of a grandmaster, Joel Benjamin, who has tried to inculcate the crucial strategic ideas which mere number-crunching cannot replicate.

Kasparov, too, has been lumbering up to defend the honour of the human race. If Deep Blue is the ultimate product of American genius, Kasparov may be its Russian equivalent (with a good deal of help from his Armenian-Jewish parentage). Having held his title for 12 years, he recently reassessed his claim to be the greatest chess master of all time with a record-breaking string of tournament victories. Having vanquished his contemporaries, Kasparov may reign supreme for a few years before he is dethroned, perhaps by the 14-year-old

French prodigy, Etienne Bacrot, the youngest grandmaster in history.

In the meantime Kasparov relishes Deep Blue's challenge. By the end of last year's match, the champion had discovered how to deny the computer the chance to deploy its awesome tactical powers. He steered it deftly into closed positions where his intuitive feel for the game enabled him to gain the upper hand by the patient accumulation of advantages. An entirely different style of chess has evolved in response to the challenge of the computer.

Will this be enough to defeat Deep Blue? Our learned chess correspondent, Raymond Keene, predicts another victory for Kasparov, again by 4-2. Whatever happens, it will be a colossal triumph for the new computer culture: an unprecedented 16 million Internet "hits" are predicted in the course of the match.

Eventually, though, even Kasparov may succumb. What would that prove? Chess resembles many other human mental activities: it was, of course, originally a simulacrum for war. The implications for neuroscience are legion. But the fact that artificial microchips can outperform human neurons does not mean we are redundant. There are more things in heaven, if not on Earth, than are dreamt of in the computer's philosophy. Deep Blue assuredly is not a genuine artificial intelligence: in essence, it is a gigantic abacus. As long as the microchip mind obeys the laws of mathematics, it will still be subordinated to mankind's purposes. When we play God with our own inventions, we use maths to persuade ourselves that we are still in control. Fortunately, God's own ways with His creations are more mysterious — and more generous.

Certainty of continuing change in European Union

From Mr Roger Vincent

Sir, History tells us that three times in the last two centuries we have led campaigns to save Europe from the creation of a dictatorial, imperial or federal superstate. It never ceases to amaze me to hear politicians, journalists and academics talking of irreversible decisions within the European Union.

The only thing that is certain is continuing change. The record of artificial unions of nations held together without underlying popular support is not good. Even after two hundred years in a predominantly monolingual culture, the strains within the United Kingdom are causing problems. Hopefully the eventual break up of the EU will not be as difficult as those of the USSR and Yugoslavia. I voted to remain in the Common Market, not for the present concept of the European Union. Perhaps we can look forward, one day, to the creation of a truly global common market.

Yours faithfully,
R. H. VINCENT,
Parkside, West Bagborough,
Taunton, Somerset.
April 30.

From Mr B. D. J. Walsh

Sir, You have performed a public service in emphasising the importance, in the coming election, of the European question, and in publishing the names of the Eurosceptic candidates of each of the main parties. The other issues in the election, such as health, education and pensions, are important, but it is extremely doubtful whether any party, however sincere in its aims, will be able to give effect to them within a European federal state.

Yours faithfully,
B. D. J. WALSH,
The Old Rectory,
Burgate, Diss, Norfolk.
April 28.

Ex-Tories as Lib Dems

From Mr Richard Cross

Sir, In the letter from ex-Tory Liberal Democrats (April 28) David Dear should not have styled himself as "Councillor, Bromley". On April 18, 1996, he was roundly defeated by the Conservative candidate in the by-election his defection provoked. All true Conservatives, one-nation Tories included, value loyalty. The British people, I believe, are only made unkind by turncoats.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant.
RICHARD CROSS,
Greenwood,
Bickley Park Road,
Bickley, Kent.
April 29.

From Mr Michael J. Howe

Sir, The letter from Emma Nicholson and others prompts me to ask if, in the next Parliament, a Bill could be introduced requiring that MPs and councillors elected to represent one party should be required to stand for re-election if they change parties.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL J. HOWE,
22 The Stanfords,
East Street, Epsom, Surrey.
April 28.

View from academe

From Sir Alan Peacock

Sir, There are two things wrong with the letter from Dr Halpern and his academic confreres (April 28): First, they underestimate our intelligence, taking up the rear in a discussion of political issues with which readers will be all too familiar, if only from reading your correspondence columns; Secondly, they proffer thinly-veiled political propaganda, relying on the authority of temporary incumbency of exalted academic positions. This is an abuse of office.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN PEACOCK,
146/4 Whitehouse Loan,
Edinburgh 9.
April 28.

But is it art?

From Mr Ian Rae

Sir, After Monday's attempt by Melvyn Bragg to draw an analogy between football and ballet, his reputation as a serious thinker stares relegation in the face.

Football supporters turn out on cold, wet Saturday afternoons not to admire feats of callisthenics, but to abuse the opposing team and its supporters, and likewise their own team and management if they fail to win.

Football will never be an art form, let alone a "game". It started with gangs of medieval youths fighting over a bundle of rags, and it will never have the element of warfare sanitised out of it by academic studies.

In the only *Swan Lake* I've ever seen the cygnets all wear the same colour shirts and there is no bawling outside the theatre afterwards.

Yours,
IAN RAE,
1257 Bristol Road South,
Northfield, Birmingham.
April 29.

From Lord Mackenzie-Stuart

Sir, May I break the sound tradition of judicial abstinence from political involvement and ask your readers to vote for the candidate who most favours closer European integration. Of course, the European Union has many imperfections and its activities require the closest scrutiny, but it is far better than what went before. I have no time for its critics who never saw shattered London or the devastated ruins of the Ruhr — and I saw both at first hand. Even at the age of 19, I was determined that this should not happen again. The European Union is our bulwark against such an eventuality.

Yours faithfully,
MACKENZIE-STUART
(President, Court of Justice of the European Communities, 1984-88),
Le Garidel, Gravières,
07140 Les Vans, France.
April 30.

From Viscount Exmouth

Sir, A Labour victory would seriously endanger the health of the nation.

Is the United Kingdom ready for constitutional changes to the House of Lords which could go so far as to bring into question the validity of the monarchy? Proposed devolution would lead to fragmentation of the British Isles, and an irrevocable commitment to a European federal union would, I believe, amount to the sequestration of our national liberty.

Yours faithfully,
EXMOUTH
(Crossbencher),
House of Lords.

From Mr Geoffrey Mayger

Sir, Your editorial decision to support Eurosceptic candidates rather than a

particular political party is to be applauded (leading article, April 29). Last night, on hearing the news, we in the St Albans Referendum Party were delighted.

However, your article expresses support for Sir George Galloway and Sir James Goldsmith, and for no other Referendum Party candidates. What, then, if the Referendum Party is fielding the only Eurosceptic candidate? We in St Albans do not even have a UKIP candidate opposing us.

As the sole Eurosceptic presence in this constituency we feel strongly that, in all fairness, we also qualify for your support.

Yours sincerely,
GEOFFREY MAYGER
(Constituency Organiser,
Referendum Party),
22 Ragged Hall Lane,
St Albans, Hertfordshire.
April 29.

From Mr Peter Jenkins

Sir, Why all the importance on whether there are 50 or 300 candidates, elected into the next Parliament, who have already said no to a single currency?

The important point surely is that all parties have promised a referendum, so the matter will be ultimately decided by the people.

A more pressing point to many is how to repatriate the powers already ceded to Brussels. The answer is, of course, to withdraw from the EU — a solution that 50 per cent of the electorate agrees with, as does the UK Independence Party.

Yours faithfully,
PETER JENKINS
(Parliamentary Candidate,
UK Independence Party
(West Dorset)),
Westway Farm, Holwell,
Nr Sherborne, Dorset.
April 30.

Defence policy

From Mr A. B. Ratcliffe

Sir, We have been bombarded almost without respite recently by the views of politicians on the wisdom or folly of becoming more involved with the rest of Europe and sharing in a common currency.

Much of the opposition seems to be based on nostalgia for a past that can almost certainly never return and for most people probably did not exist in the first place.

What I have yet to see or hear mentioned by any politician is that we are being pushed into the eastward expansion of Nato, something potentially far more significant.

Yours faithfully,
A. B. RATCLIFFE,
38 Bradwell Road,
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire.

From the Vice-President of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Sir, Iain Duncan Smith (article, "Defence silence is sinister", April 23) is not on strong ground in trying to

make a party political issue about what today is defined as defence.

Unhappily all the three main political parties are wedded to concepts of security which have long passed their sell-by date.

Real security is not a matter of having better weapons and stronger forces than other countries. This is arms races started. In an increasingly interdependent world it means collective action in terms of conflict prevention as well as conflict resolution. Many of the threats which face our world today, ranging from poverty to pollution, have no military solutions. Indeed the military are often part of the problem.

In 1982 Olof Palme's commission produced a report entitled *Common Security*. It should be read again. That was the hope and vision of those who signed the United Nations Charter in 1945.

Yours faithfully,
BRUCE KENT,
Vice-President,
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament,
162 Holloway Road, N7.
April 24.

Dimbleby interview

From Group Captain H. B. Verity, DSO and bar, DFC, RAF (retd)

Sir, Nicholas Wapshott (TV Watch, April 29, later editions) describes David Dimbleby as a "monstrous inquisitor" interviewing the Prime Minister on *Panorama*.

I found his "blistering interrogation", unrelieved by a single courteous word, quite intolerable. Dear old Richard Dimbleby would be shocked.

Interviewers with better manners like Sir David Frost or Jim Naughtie are much more effective.

Yours politely,
HUGH VERITY,
17 Jocelyn Road, Richmond, Surrey.
April 29.

Northern Ireland

From the Chairman of the North Down Conservative Association

Sir, Your election guide on Northern Ireland (April 29) was excellent and summed up as well as possible in the space provided the problems that bedevil us, with the exception of a couple of points.

You state that neither the Conservatives nor Labour are "seriously trying to secure representation" here. In this you are wrong in regard to both parties.

Labour are not trying at all. They seek to govern us and yet refuse to put candidates up. To the best of my knowledge, this part of the United Kingdom remains the one part of the world from which you cannot join the Labour Party.

On the other hand, no one seriously doubts for a second the personal commitment of John Major to Northern Ireland. Furthermore, the support and encouragement given by Central Office to Conservatives in Northern Ireland over the last year in general, and to our candidates for this election in particular, have been absolutely outstanding. Their commitment is there, as is ours.

Yours faithfully,
J. ROBERTSON,
Chairman, North Down
Conservative Association,
2 May Avenue, Bangor, Co Down.
April 25.

Labour 'war book'

From Mr Bill Kearns

Sir, The Labour Party must be very grateful to Dr Mawhinney for drawing our attention to the Labour election "war book" (report and summary, April 24).

The summary clearly sets out the advantage to be gained by voting Labour. It is to be hoped that the party will in due course acknowledge Dr Mawhinney's contribution to its success.

Yours sincerely,
BILL KEARNS,
11 Court Royal Mews,
Northlands Road,
Southampton, Hampshire.
April 24.

Opinion polls

From the Chairman of MORI

Sir, I have never been a fan of Woodrow Wyatt. Today, writing more from prejudice than from fact ("Don't be duped by the polls"), he misleads his readers to believe that "in the 1992 election, polls showed a clear Labour victory". They didn't; all five polls published on election day pointed to a hung Parliament.

Further, Wyatt states that "when asked how they had voted, the majority said Labour". They didn't; the exit poll for the BBC forecast a 4 per cent Tory lead, the exit poll for ITN forecast 5 per cent for the Conservatives. Hardly "the majority said Labour".

In five of the last six general elections, MORI's final poll has been within 1 per cent of the share for each party. In 1992, we were out by 4 per cent and 5 per cent for the Tory and Labour share, but it wasn't good enough and we hope to be much closer to our previous record on Friday.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT M. WORCESTER
Chairman, MORI,
32 Old Queen Street, SW1.
April 29.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

One-woman band versus MOB rule

From Baroness Falkender

Sir, May I make one or two comments on the piece today entitled "Tony's friends plan MOB (mates of Blair) rule".

There can be no comparison between Mr Blair's office today and the Wilson office. In 1964 Harold Wilson had only one principal aide, myself. We had the services of a part-time private secretary — very intelligent and efficient, and one office junior. There was no press secretary, I was, therefore, in the sense and style of your piece, Jonathan Powell, Peter Mandelson, Anji Hunter and Alastair Campbell rolled into one. I had to cover all those roles by myself on a very modest salary indeed.

The Wilson office operated on a shoestring. There were no public funds in those days for the Leader of the Opposition's office. Party headquarters provided very frugal assistance and only tiny amounts were available from other sources.

The Blair office is awash with money. It has a large state subvention — taxpayers' money — contributions from political sources and allied organisations, and a very substantial private blind trust to fund its operations. The Blair campaign has been professionally superb and so it should be with such resources at its disposal. I salute them and for their good fortune in being fully funded. It has been beyond the wildest dreams of the Wilson office.

When Harold Wilson went into No 10 in 1964 there was no separate political presence there, no political office or position of Political Secretary to the Prime Minister. My role in 1964 was to create, set up and organise a political office which I did and it has remained part of the No 10 structure since. I was succeeded as political secretary by Douglas Hurd, Tom McNally, Richard Ryder and others.

We were only able to recruit a press secretary — because of funding difficulties — in 1965 when Gerald Kaufman was appointed in time for the 1966 election.

Eighty per cent of a prime minister's time is spent on Government, only at most 20 per cent on his political role as leader of his party. The Civil Service runs No 10 and Whitehall. It is therefore not going to be easy for those described in your article to seize more of his time and fanciful to suggest they plan MOB rule.

Yours sincerely,
MARCIA FALKENDER,
House of Lords.
April 30.

Victory anthem?

From Mr Robert Gardener

Sir, Mr David Powell (letter, April 28) asks why your correspondents should assume that the Church of England has "got it right" on anthems for the general election "when it seems to have got almost everything else wrong in the past 50 years".

Should one assume, therefore, that he was appointed Parish Clerk of St Dunstan-in-the-West prior to 1947?

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT GARDENER
(Organ Scholar,
All Saints', Northallerton),
17 Grenadier Drive,
Northallerton, North Yorkshire.

Bluebells strike back

From Mr Paul Roberts

Sir, You report that bluebells are easily damaged by the tread of feet (Mind and matter, April 28). But what about the tread of feet being easily damaged by the bluebells? My glissade on a patch of the little blighters has left me with a broken leg for the last six weeks.

Yours sincerely,
PAUL ROBERTS,
56 Barley Way,
Stanway, Colchester, Essex.
April 28.

Chips with everything

From Mr David Fisher

Sir, Your correspondents today, who write in praise of the contribution made by the silicon chip to job creation, are unlikely to agree with an American expert on business administration, Professor Warren Bennis, quoted in *New Work Habits for a Radically Changing World* (Price Pritchett, Pritchett & Associates, 1994).

The professor forecast that the factory of the future will have only two employees, a man and a dog. The man will be there to feed the dog. The dog will be there to keep the man from touching the equipment.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID FISHER,
50 Valley Drive,
Brighton, East Sussex.
April 28.

From Mr John Dean

Sir, Flight Lieutenant M. Rubenstein (letter, April 28) has obviously not heard of the microchip manufacturer who was so successful he had to move to smaller premises.

Yours,
JOHN DEAN,
2 Wharton Road,
Headington, Oxford.
April 28.



1. *Chlorophyll a* and *Chlorophyll b* were determined by the method of Arar and Collins (1971) using a Shimadzu 1010 spectrophotometer. The concentration of chlorophyll was expressed as $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ of the sample.

OBITUARIES

PROFESSOR LEONARD FORSTER

Leonard Forster, FBA, Schröder Professor of German in the University of Cambridge, 1961-79, died on April 18 aged 84. He was born on March 30, 1913.

In an age of ever-increasing academic specialisation, Leonard Forster was one of the last great generalists. His responsibilities, as he saw them, were to the whole of the subject he professed, and his scholarship covered the historical span of German literature from Old High German to the present day. Poetry of all periods was a particular enthusiasm, and his valuable *Handbook of German Verse*, first published in 1957 and reprinted many times since, conveyed the range of his sympathies even to the general reader; he provided his own prose translation of each poem.

A naturally talented linguist, he was one of the most distinguished Germanists of his generation but was equally at home in Italian, French, Latin, Dutch and Czech. Like the Renaissance humanists to whose work he was specially drawn, he was concerned with the sum of intellectual experience and endeavour. What fascinated him was the living tradition, the connections and continuities on which civilisation is built.

In a volume published in Germany in 1972 a number of distinguished Germanists answered the question "How, why, and to what end did it become a historian of literature?". In Forster's answer (a revised version of a talk he had given on the BBC German service in 1956) there is a characteristically modest and direct statement: "Anyone who is not himself a creative mind — there are very few of these, and I know that I am not one of them — must either preserve or destroy. For me the task is to preserve everything that is really alive."

This is the true purpose that

ran through all his writings. He was almost uniquely qualified to write a great synoptic work on the European Baroque; that he never did so is a source of lasting regret to his colleagues. But he traced and proved the continuity of vital intellectual experience in the shifting patterns and crises of despair of the European tradition, and he showed how this continuity was maintained in the new perspectives of our scientific age.

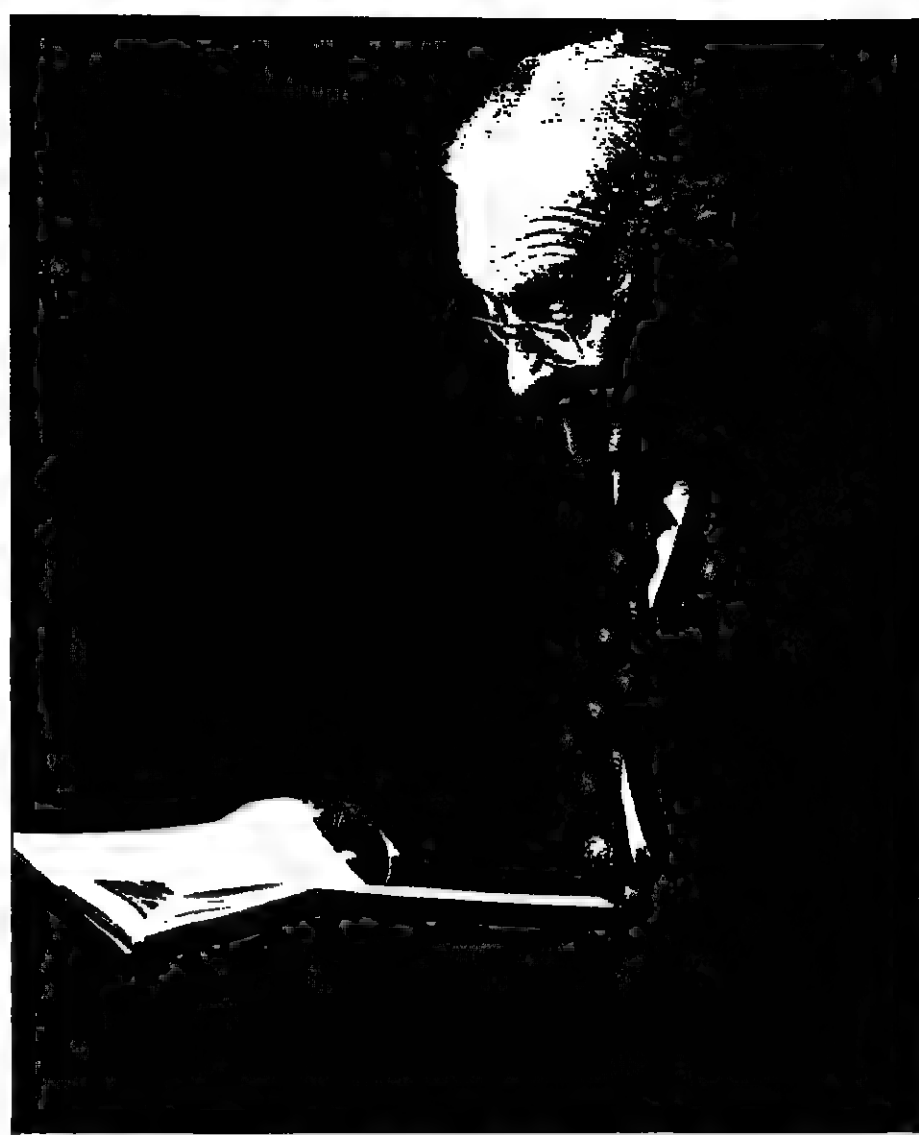
Leonard Wilson Forster was born in London. Although his impeccably elegant German and his complete familiarity with the German way of life often led to the assumption that he was of German origin, his family was entirely English; some members of it were merchants and others served in the Indian Civil Service.

From Marlborough he went up to Trinity Hall, Cambridge, as a scholar in 1931. After taking his degree he went to Germany as a Thomas Carlyle Student; in the next five years he was at the universities of Leipzig, Bonn, Königsberg and Basle.

He was thus able — through contact with Oskar Walzel, Ernst Robert Curtius and Paul Hankamer — to experience the last great flowering of German humane scholarship, even as the Nazis were trying to destroy it. He also began to explore the intellectual history of The Netherlands and Belgium, and, as Lektor at Basle, achieved real understanding of the cultural life of Switzerland.

His Basle dissertation on Georg Rudolf Weckherlin (1584-1653), a Swabian poet and diplomat who had lived in England and wrote in Latin, German, English and French, was already an important contribution to 17th-century scholarship; it also established some of the concerns that were to occupy him for the rest of his career. It was also in Basle that he met his wife.

In 1935 Forster returned to Cambridge as a Fellow of



Selwyn and a university assistant lecturer. From 1939 to 1941 he was attached to Naval Staff Admiralty, from 1941 to 1945 to the Foreign Office, and from 1945 to 1946 was on special duties, partly in Germany, as a Lieutenant-Commander RNVR. He was one of several notable Germanists to have done valuable wartime intelligence work and to have been associated with the code-breaking operations at Bletchley Park.

He returned to Cambridge in 1946 to become Dean of Selwyn and, in the following year, university lecturer; but in 1950 he was called to the chair of German at University College London. His inaugural lecture, *The Temper of 17th-century German Literature*, set some decisive guidelines for all subsequent research on the period.

His decade at University College was, above all, a period of inspiring and devoted

teaching of undergraduate students. In 1961 he succeeded Walter Bruford as Schröder Professor at Cambridge and became a Professorial Fellow of Selwyn. In the following years he achieved an astonishing tempo and range of scholarly books and articles, not only in the purely Germanic field but also in comparative studies. *The Ice Fire: Studies in European Petrarchism* (1969) and *The Poet's Tongue: Multilingualism in Literature*

(1971), especially, opened up new critical vistas.

During his tenure of the Cambridge chair Forster continued to be co-editor of the journal *German Life and Letters*, to which he contributed numerous articles and reviews, and he constantly gave generous help to young scholars struggling with their first works for print.

He delighted in foreign travel and was a most effective and welcome ambassador-at-large among the Germanists of other countries. Thus he was a visiting professor at Toronto, Heidelberg, McGill and Ottawa; he was also a guest at Leipzig, Prague, New York and elsewhere in the United States, and he was a frequent visitor to the University of Leiden, which conferred an honorary D.Litt on him in 1975.

The Gold Medal of the Goethe-Institut Munich was awarded to him in 1966. He was elected to the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences and Letters in 1968, the Royal Belgian Academy of Dutch Language and Literature in 1973, and the Deutsche Akademie für Sprache und Dichtung in 1976. He was awarded the Grosses Verdienstkreuz by the Federal Republic of Germany for his work in interpreting Germany to the British.

In 1970 he became president of the International Association for Germanic Studies and took over the arduous duty of preparing for its quinquennial congress at Cambridge in 1975, which did much to ease the tensions of Germanistic scholarship at a time of some controversy about the subject's methods and future direction. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1976. In 1982, colleagues and former pupils honoured him with a *Festschrift* whose title, *From Wolfram and Petrarch to Goethe and Grass*, nicely caught the diversity of his achievements.

His wife Jeanne, a son and two daughters survive him.

JEAN HENDERSON

Jean Henderson, barrister and Liberal parliamentary candidate, died on April 1 aged 97. She was born on December 18, 1899.

JEAN HENDERSON loved general elections. She fought three, although she never won. She loved the law, although she was not called to the Bar until she was 43. She became Head of Chambers in her mid-seventies and argued successfully her last case before the Court of Appeal at the age of 83.

Her part in saving Hampstead Garden Suburb during the property boom of the 1960s earned her the title of "God-goddess of battles" among fellow fighters. She was also a keen left-handed cricketer and holiday golfer and played the violin and viola — she was a member of Bernard Robinsson's chamber orchestra, the Informals.

This colourful, humorous, determined, helpful and eccentric woman was one of two daughters of John Henderson, secretary of the National Liberal Club for 20 years, and his wife Florence. Her father was a lapsed Presbyterian, her mother a strong Quaker who taught scripture at the Hall School, Weybridge.

Jean Mary Henderson's education began at this innovative and experimental establishment, run by her aunt, Eva Gilpin, later Lady Sadler. She wrote about it in *Miss Gilpin and the Hall School* (1949) and *A Lasting Spring* (1988).

She went next to The Mount, the Quaker School in York, leaving as head girl to take a degree in French, German and Russian at Bedford College, London University. It qualified her to join the foreign desk on the *Westminster Gazette*, from which she transferred to the *Daily News*, another Liberal newspaper. She continued her modest journalistic career by editing a magazine for the Women's International League. She also acted as part-time secretary to the cartoonist, David Low.

She was strongly influenced by her parents. Her worship of her father attracted her to cricket and she captained the Bedford College Women's XI and played in the University of London side. She also followed his lead in making an interest in politics (she supported the Women's Liberal Association) and literature (she maintained close connections with the Omar Khayyam Club, of which her father had been honorary secretary for many years, and in the Johnson Society and the Dickens Fellowship). She chose to remain in the parental home.

Her life only changed when her father and mother died within a week of each other in 1938. A period of powerful mourning was the catharsis which enabled her to set out on a new career — in the law. She joined the Inner Temple in 1940 and was called to the Bar in 1945.

She was at home in a man's world. Although her first clerk was implacably against a pioneering woman barrister, she was never a feminist lawyer. "How *infra dig* to be accorded a seat in Chambers by virtue of a quota or ratio — and unwillingly at that!" she wrote in a letter to *The Times* on January 11, 1978.

Her defence work led to her being hailed as "the pin-up of the Midlands underworld" but she also protected for Scotland Yard into her seventies. She served as a Justice of the Peace at Willesden (where her father had run a preparatory school) and was deputy chairman of three wages councils.

With childhood memories of a father working in the Liberal Party Publications Department when the drama of the Parliament Bill curbing the House of Lords was being acted out, Jean Henderson the lawyer predictably stood for the House of Commons. She fought three general election campaigns — Barnet (1945), Lincoln (1950) and Luton (1955).

Throughout the Second World War she was an air-raid warden in Hampstead Way. After the war she defended the Garden Suburb again, using her legal skills to ensure that it continued as a unified estate. She was the first chairman of the Suburb Protection Society set up in 1962 and was among the first directors of the New Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust established in 1968.

As she moved into her nineties, it was hard for her to acknowledge that the care she needed could no longer be supplied at home. A puzzled and frustrated energy made the restrictions of her last years very difficult for her to bear; but her warmth, wit and authority continued to win the affection of those around her. She never married.

Jean Henderson during the second of her election campaigns, at Lincoln in 1950

JEAN HENDERSON was born on December 18, 1899, and died on April 1, 1997, at the age of 97.

THE RIGHT REV DAVID CARTWRIGHT



The Right Rev David Cartwright, former Bishop of Southampton, died on April 24 aged 76. He was born on July 15, 1921.

DAVID CARTWRIGHT exemplified in his ministry the best traditions of the Church of England. His earlier highly valued administrative work was crowned by four years as Bishop Suffragan of Southampton, a post he held from 1984 until he retired in 1988.

Liberal in outlook and conservative in manner, he was a greatly loved pastor, a highly skilled administrator and a widely-read scholar. A close friend of the controversial theologian Bishop John Robinson, he kept a framed photograph of Robinson in his study, as well as inheriting his

pastoral cross from the author of *Honest to God*.

Born in Lincolnshire, the son of a minister, Edward David Cartwright was educated at Grimsby Parish Church Choir School, going on to read theology and history at Selwyn College, Cambridge. Encouraged in his early years by the then Vicar of Grimsby, Hedley Burrows (later to be Dean of Hereford), he was greatly influenced as an undergraduate by the Student Christian Movement, eventually becoming president of the Cambridge SCM, the more academic rival to the muscular Inter-Collegiate Christian Union.

Not himself attracted by the Evangelical tradition, he trained at Westcott House and served his time at Boston

Parish Church, under the legendary Canon A. M. Cook.

After the war Cartwright spent 25 notable years in Bristol. He was incumbent of St Leonard Redfield, 1948-52, Olveston with Aust, 1952-60, and Bishopston, 1960-73. In addition to his parochial work he became highly regarded throughout the city and diocese for his lively and positive approach as secretary of the Bristol Council of Churches, chairman of Bristol Christian Aid Committee and, for seven years, secretary of the Bristol Diocesan Conference and Synod. In 1970 the Bishop, Oliver Tomkins, made him an honorary canon of Bristol Cathedral.

From 1956 to 1973 Cartwright served as a Proctor in Convocation for the diocese of Bristol, regularly getting re-elected by his fellow clergy. His ecumenical and administrative skills soon came to be in demand nationally, and his diminutive figure was frequently to be seen slowly pacing the slightly antiseptic corridors of Church House, Westminster.

He was involved both in the Anglican-Presbyterian conversations and the Anglican-Methodist Unity Scheme, which he persuaded the new General Synod to reconsider in 1971 after its rejection by the Convocations two years earlier. He was a Church Commissioner and a member of both the Central Board of Finance and the Church of England Pensions Board. Clergy housing and pensions were his special interests and he remained chairman of Morley College until his death.

In 1973, at the invitation of Falkner Allison, Cartwright became Archdeacon of Winchester and vicar of the country parish of Sparsholt, while

continuing with his London work.

He soon won the respect and affection of both clergy and laity in Hampshire, where he was widely trusted. His wisdom and experience, enhanced by his rather elderly demeanour, were greatly valued. His acute mind and unfailing bravery enabled him to go straight to the heart of many complex problems.

A genial and skilful debater, he often managed to persuade doughty opponents to change their minds and support him. Working closely with the diocesan secretary and his staff, he was said to consider a day wasted if he had not attended at least one committee meeting. He was a notable trainer of curates in his Bristol days, he continued to befriend and encourage younger clergy and read many perceptive papers at meetings of the Morley Society.

Cartwright was consecrated Bishop of Southampton shortly before Bishop John Taylor retired as Bishop of Winchester.

Although dogged by ill-health, his short episcopal ministry was fruitful, and he helped to make some enterprising appointments. Always a model of dignity and decorum, he nevertheless had a mischievous sense of humour, which enlivened many solemn ecclesiastical occasions with whispered asides.

He retired to Warmminster, where he spent his final years making new friends in the surrounding villages and studying the life of the Edwardian Archdeacon of Winchester, W. A. Fearon, whose fascinating parochial diaries he owned.

He married Elsie Rogers in 1946. She survives him with their son and two daughters.



Jean Henderson during the second of her election campaigns, at Lincoln in 1950

JEAN HENDERSON was born on December 18, 1899, and died on April 1, 1997, at the age of 97.

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CHERNOBYL'S SECOND REACTOR

By Christopher Walker, Michael Binyon and Thomson Press

Russian and American accounts were differing sharply last night on the seriousness of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear plant. But official figures released from Moscow showed that almost 200 people were taken to hospital for treatment, with most of them detained.

American intelligence sources insisted that the fire at the plant was still raging out of control and now threatening to ignite an adjacent reactor. Evidence from commercial satellite pictures showing "two bright red spots" beneath a cloud of bluish smoke suggested that a meltdown at the second reactor may already have begun.

Soviet television showed what was said to be a photograph of the plant after the accident. A commentator said the picture, showing the top of the reactor building destroyed, proved that Western reports of massive destruction or fire were false.

A statement from the Council of Ministers, reported on the main evening television news bulletins, denied that thousands of people had been killed. It said 197 people were treated in

ON THIS DAY

May 1, 1986

The effects of this disaster are probably still immeasurable. Radiation leaks were detected in Scandinavia, and in parts of Cumbria movements of sheep were temporarily banned.

hospital after the accident and that 49 of them had been discharged after medical examination. It maintained that only two people had died. Radiation levels around Chernobyl were falling, and teams of specialists were cleaning polluted areas, the statement said.

The statement was being seen as the opening of a Soviet propaganda offensive designed to counter the Western accounts of the disaster. But a version of the accident given by the Soviet Ambassador to Norway conceded that a partial evacuation had taken place in the Chernobyl area.

Western diplomats and scientific experts in

Moscow quickly dismissed the TV news bulletin version of events. "It was for domestic consumption, and to try and blunt the criticism which is mounting by the hour," one diplomat said. "I did not believe a word of it. As for the casualties, I think they left a few noughts off the end of their figures."

A special inter-agency task force set up by President Reagan to gather information on the disaster said that radioactivity was still spreading out of the plant, though at a lesser rate. But Mr Lee Thomas, chairman of the task force and the head of the Environmental Protection Agency, said they had no indication so far of problems at the second reactor unit.

EPA experts and others from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission said Soviet officials managed to shut down the three other reactors when problems began on Friday.

But loss of coolant for some yet unknown reason led to an overheating of the core on Saturday, the rupture of pressure tubes and the escape of superheated steam which reacted with the graphite cladding to produce a volatile release of hydrogen and carbon monoxide.

This led to a violent chemical explosion on Saturday, tearing open the building, allowing in oxygen and causing the subsequent fire.

مكتبة الأصل

NEWS

Blair heading for No 10 say polls

■ Tony Blair's Labour Party is heading for a large Commons majority in today's general election to end a record 18 years of Conservative Government.

A MORI poll for *The Times*, taken on Tuesday and updated yesterday, shows that Labour has maintained its lead throughout the campaign and that the Tories have failed to stage a last-minute recovery. Support for the Liberal Democrats appears to have firmed up. Pages 1, 9-15, 22, 23

Clare Short tipped for Cabinet post

■ Clare Short, the Labour leftwinger, is expected to win a place in Tony Blair's first Cabinet if he wins the election. John Prescott, the deputy leader, would become Deputy Prime Minister and head a new super-ministry covering the environment, transport and regional affairs. Page 1

Role for Heseltine

Michael Heseltine could become the next chairman of the giant industrial group GEC. He is said to have made clear his interest in the job, now held by Lord Prior, who is retiring. Page 1

Mother jailed

The mother of a boy thief has been jailed for refusing to pay his court costs. She was protesting at a refusal by magistrates to lock up her son. Page 1

Sacking condemned

A privatised utility company which sacked one of its managers for gross misconduct but refused to tell him what the allegation was or who made it was criticised by a senior judge. Page 2

Maze talks fall

Talks between loyalist politicians and government officials in Belfast failed to end the second night of protests by terrorist inmates at the Maze prison. Page 2

Carer who betrayed

A one-time ballerina lived a long and glorious life. But the last years of Margery de Brissac Bernard were spent with a care assistant who plundered her life savings. Page 5

Skier accused

A skier was charged with manslaughter after he lost control on the slopes in Colorado and collided with a British man, who died of head injuries. Page 7

Sloth bears return to active service

■ Sloth bears went on display at London Zoo, the first bears seen there for 12 years. To counter fears that zoo life harms bears' well-being, the two sloth bears are sharing the Mappin Terraces with deer, monkeys and peacocks. The bears, contrary to their name, are agile and escape routes have been created for other animals if they get bad-tempered. Page 3

Darwin demonstrated

The evolution of lizards on a group of tiny Caribbean islands has given Darwin's evolutionary theories a leg-up. Page 7

Car phone deaths

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents called for a ban on the use of mobile telephones in cars after two deaths because drivers were making calls. Page 8

Rebels march on

Zaire's rebels vowed to continue their advance on Kinshasa after President Mobutu threw diplomats into disarray by quibbling over the venue for talks. Page 16

Reno under fire

Janet Reno, the US Attorney-General, endured a blistering interrogation by the Senate Judiciary Committee on her refusal to appoint an independent counsel to investigate campaign fund-raising. Page 18

Bomber's 'easy target'

The wife of an army friend of Timothy McVeigh has described how he planned the Oklahoma City bombing and told her the federal building was an 'easy target'. Page 18

Iran protest

European Union foreign ministers are to delay indefinitely the return of their ambassadors to Tehran in support of Germany, whose ambassador has been refused re-entry. Page 19



Chris Patten, Governor of Hong Kong, applauds Cantonese opera performers during a visit to the Kwun Tong district yesterday

BUSINESS

Co-op: A Labour government would bring forward a Bill to protect the Co-operative movement in the wake of the recent hostile bid by Andrew Regan. Page 27

GKN: The automotive engineering group is making its first important strategic move since C.K. Chow took over as chief executive four months ago by spending £32 million. Page 27

Boosey & Hawkes: The music publisher and instrument maker may lose its independence because its largest shareholder has put its stake up for sale. Page 27

Markets: The FT-SE 100 rose 2.8 to close at 4436.0. Sterling fell from 100.3 to 100.1 after a fall from \$1.6310 to \$1.6225 and from DM2.8127 to DM2.8098. Page 30

SPORT

Cricket: British Universities recorded the second surprise victory of this season's Benson and Hedges Cup when they beat Sussex by 19 runs in Cambridge. Page 47

Snooker: Stephen Hendry overcame concerted pressure from Darren Morgan to win 13-10 and reach the semi-finals of the world championships. Page 50

Table tennis: Katy Parker, 12, and Michael Chan, 13, England's representatives in the mixed doubles at the world championships, lost their first-round match to two teenaged Ghanaians. Page 49

Racing: Reg Akehurst, the Epsom trainer, pulled off his third insular Victoria Cup success at Ascot when Tregaron beat World Premier by 2½ lengths. Page 45

ARTS

Big Al, little Johnny: Al Pacino is a smalltime Mafia hood and Johnny Depp the undercover FBI agent who wins his confidence in *Donnie Brasco*, Mike Newell's thoughtful new film. Page 37

Making waves: Best of the week's video releases is Lars Von Trier's epic melodrama of dark Hebridean passions, *Breaking the Waves*, with Emily Watson. Page 38

Pedding rose: It has fine performances from Phoebe Nicholls, Eleanor Bron and Celia Imrie, but Lorca's *Doña Rosita the Spinster* lacks passion. Page 39

Wishful thinking: Joshua Sobel's tender new play, *The Village*, begins its British tour next week at the Brighton festival in Israel's Gesher Theatre production. Page 39

FEATURES

HRT help: What women need is a form of HRT that spares the breast and uterus but saves the bones, brain and heart, says Dr Thomas Sutcliffe. News of such a hormonal preparation is about to be announced. Page 20

Three in one: More than 20 years since he found fame in *The Likely Lads*, Rodney Bewes talks to NoREEN Taylor about his solo adaptation of Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat*. Page 21

Lone stars: Marianne Wiggins questions the literary benefits of seclusion as she reviews Thomas Pynchon's new novel. Page 40, 41

Bergains: Cheap getaways are available for the Bank Holiday weekend. Page 43

The Italian counter-offensive on EMU began yesterday in Luxembourg. The tension between the partners — between the ins and the outs — is going to increase month by month and one will reach a moment of decision in a crisis the like of has never been seen during these 40 European years. — *La Repubblica*

Professor Leonard Foster, German scholar, *The Right Rev David Cartwright*, former Bishop of Southampton. Page 25

Election '97: Europe, defence, Dimbleby interview, Labour "war book", opinion polls: bluebells strike back. Page 23

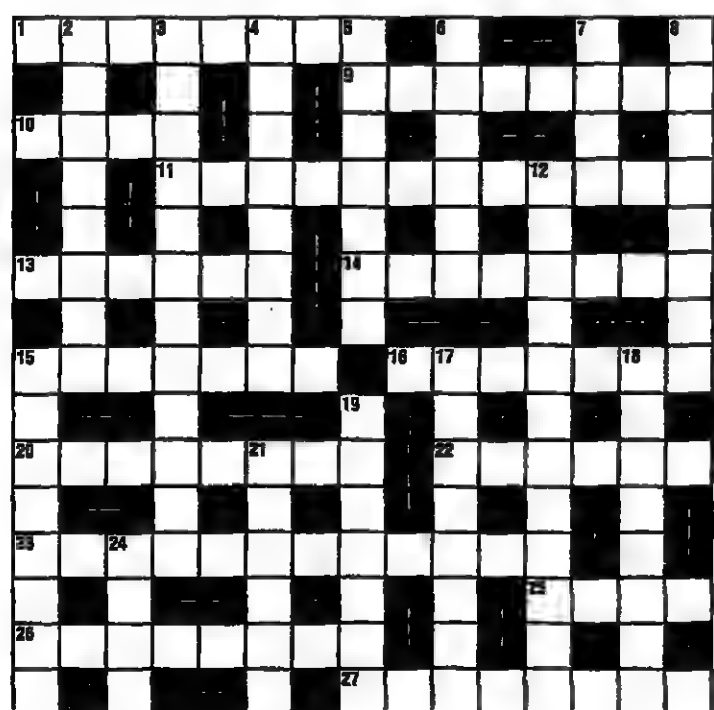
IN THE TIMES

■ RULE OF LAW
Frances Gibb profiles Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the nation's longest-serving Lord Chancellor

■ POP
The R&B veterans Dr Feelgood celebrate 25 years together



THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,468



- ACROSS
- Bird one sees come out of egg head first (8).
 - One in polluted environment about to develop rash (8).
 - Some Olympic athletes wanting to eat unsuitable food (4).
 - Virago is abroad, collecting payment for stall (4,4,4).
 - Playing substitute (6).
 - Count, perhaps, that's equivalent to 3 when broken down (8).
 - Come safely through what'er may go wrong (7).
 - Deer with short, retiring fawn (7).
 - Way of identifying Eastern headman going West (8).
 - Managing to supply top for wall (6).
 - Chance to buy early surlier staff spoil (5,7).
- DOWN
- Flag is visible round Eastern state (4).
 - Book, about one pound, about Tarka (8).
 - Fell twice in ski race (8).
 - Relative's caught cold in transport (8).
 - Alternative for master, she is didactic leader (12).
 - It's instrumental in cutting short outing to fish (8).
 - Man embraces love in Ireland, an idealised woman (7).
 - By entering vessel, choice is made (6).
 - Could say it's a very small contribution (4).
 - To quote ancient, "Mutatis mutandis" (8).
 - Produce glass in two languages (6-6).
 - Members of orchestra decline unexpected cash (8).
 - Stack wood in vehicle (8).
 - Net charge for refuse disposal (8).
 - Main meal (7).
 - Fill with air the empty space, turning up first (6).
 - Cover up? Enquiry doesn't keep quiet (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,467

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D N E S E A
T I M B E R N O V E M B E R
U O I N M E K
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B T S V R A T I
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M E R C H A N T B A N K E R

Times Two Crossword, page 52

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY MAY 1 1997

US growth figures cause market turbulence

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

LONDON and New York markets endured a turbulent day's trading after new data showed that the US economy is growing at its fastest pace for nine years.

First-quarter US GDP grew by 5.6 per cent, compared with 3.8 per cent in the previous three months — well above market expectations of a 4.1 per cent rise. The figures caused the Dow Jones industrial average to tumble 25 points in early trading, as concern mounted that the Federal Reserve Bank will raise interest rates by as much as half a point when it meets on May 20 to help to cool the US economy.

Wall Street shares later recovered on renewed hopes of a government budget pact after John Kasich, chairman of the House Budget Committee, suggested that Congress and President Clinton were close to a deal. The Dow Jones was up 68.63 points at 7030.66 in afternoon trading.

In London, shares touched an all-time high of 4,466.5 in early trading, boosted by Wall Street's 179-point rise on Tuesday night. But with the market remaining focused on activity in New York — rather than the general election — the FT-SE 100 tracked the Dow lower, before recovering slightly to close up 2.8 points at 4,436.0.

Traders said that shares in London could

well rise more sharply tomorrow in a post-election "relief rally" as institutions return to the market after weeks of low trading volumes. But the day's trading is likely to be overshadowed by the release of important labour market statistics in the US, which will give further clues to the timing and extent of a US rate rise.

The pound enjoyed a quieter day on the foreign exchange markets, with dealers cautious ahead of the election. Sterling's trade-weighted index briefly hit a post-ERM high of 100.4, before falling back to close at 100.1. The pound also lost some ground against the dollar, which was boosted by the GDP figures, closing down almost a cent at

\$1.6225, and fell from DM2.8127 to DM2.8096.

Strong consumer spending led the acceleration in US economic growth. Consumer spending jumped 6.4 per cent in the first quarter — the largest increase since 1985.

The markets were also concerned that the figures showed prices growing at their fastest for two years with the implicit price deflator, contained within the GDP data, climbing to 2.3 per cent (1.5 per cent). But some economists pointed to the rapid build-up of company stocks to suggest GDP growth would be more subdued in the second quarter as companies wind down stock levels.

Ethan Harris, senior economist at Leh-

man Government Securities, predicted that the impact of rising stocks would be to knock 1 per cent off second-quarter growth. But he added that the Fed will remain "very nervous" after the latest figures.

Bernard Pischetsrieder, chief executive of BMW, last night gave warning that Britain risks an overvalued pound if it refuses to join a single currency. He also said that London could be overtaken by Frankfurt as the financial capital of Europe. BMW is worried by Britain's lack of enthusiasm for monetary union because of the impact it will have on Rover, which it acquired in 1994.

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BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FTSE 100	4436.0	(+2.8)
Yield	4.54%	
FTSE All share	2136.31	(+0.43)
Nikkei	12903.30	(+302.88)
New York		
Dow Jones	7036.28	(+74.25)*
S&P Composite	802.25	(+8.24)*

US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(95%)
Long Bond	5 3/4%	(95%)
Yield	6.96%	(8.69%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-month Interbank	6 1/4%	(8 1/4%)
Life long call	110%	(108 1/4%)

STERLING		
New York	1.6227	(1.6323)
London	1.6225	(1.6313)
DM	2.8096	(2.8139)
FF	8.4701	(8.4873)
Sfr	2.3608	(2.3529)
Yen	205.52	(206.77)
C Index	100.1	(100.3)

DOLLAR		
London	1.7388	(1.7245)
FF	2.6380	(2.6185)
Sfr	1.4740	(1.4680)
Yen	126.52	(128.52)
S Index	106.4	(108.2)
Tokyo close Yen	126.91	

NORTH SEA OIL		
Brut 15-day (Jul)	\$18.70	(\$18.85)

GOLD		
London close	\$340.86	(\$339.85)

* denotes midday trading price

Labour's law would ring-fence the Co-op

BY ROBERT MILLER

A NEW Labour government would bring forward a Bill soon after it came to power to protect the Co-operative movement in the wake of the hostile bid by Galileo, Andrew Regan's special-purpose vehicle.

The Co-op Bill, which has been in the planning stage for some time, would be included in the Queen's Speech, a matter of weeks after today's election. Its importance has grown of late because of Galileo's attempt to launch a £1-billion-plus hostile bid for the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS).

Mike O'Brien, Shadow Economic Secretary to the Treasury, yesterday confirmed that a Co-op Bill has

cialist Group in Europe.

There were a number of anomalies in the Co-op's structure that were highlighted during the Galileo bid, not least the potential offer of up to £1,000 from Galileo to each member of the Co-op. This was never possible even under the current Industrial and Provident Societies Act, which governs the Co-op movement. However, the new Bill would override this principle yet impose controls.

The Bill would reiterate that Co-op shares are always worth £1 and do not offer the prospect of any capital growth but rather the right to trade at favourable terms within the movement.

Insiders, however, do not rule out the more widespread use of the old-fashioned "Co-op divi" as much needed business and social reforms are introduced throughout the movement.

The Co-op Bill would also allow members to raise cash more readily in the City's wholesale money market in the same way that public companies do.

This aspect of the new legislation is expected to play a crucial role in the re-organisation of the Co-op movement, which is expected to get under way shortly. The need for reform was underlined on Tuesday, when Co-operative Retail Services (CRS), the biggest shareholder in the CWS, revealed that it had plunged into the red to the tune of nearly £14 million.

Roger Jones, secretary of the CWS, said: "The proposed Bill will clarify the rights of our members, the rules under which they operate and set out for the first time what common ownership means in Co-op terms."

"Until now some parts of the Co-op movement have acted like limited companies while others have been more akin to charities."

Peter Clarke, national secretary to the CWS, said: "You can never legislate for City whizz-kids but the planned act will set out more clearly than ever before what the Co-op movement is and what it can and cannot do."

"At the same time, it will level the playing field with our retail competitors. The Regan incident is in my opinion a distraction."



Wrong note: Richard Holland, B&H's chief executive, said that the Carl Fischer decision to put itself on the auction block was a letdown for him

Fischer sale blow for Boosey & Hawkes

BY ERIC REGAN

BOOSEY & HAWKES, the music publisher and instrument maker whose history goes back to the 1760s, may lose its independence because its largest shareholder has put itself up for sale.

Carl Fischer, of New York, the family-controlled music publisher and retailer that has 45.3 per cent voting stake in B&H, has hired CS First Boston to find a buyer. The new owner would inherit the B&H investment and, under City takeover rules, would have to make a public offer to the other B&H shareholders.

B&H shares closed at 367 1/2 p. up 70p, valuing the company at £170 million.

Richard Holland, 52, B&H's chief executive, said that Carl Fischer's decision to put itself on the auction block was a letdown for him. "I'm saddened by this development. My preference is for this company to remain quoted and independent."

He said that he had not considered a management buyout of either Carl Fischer or B&H. No bidders have emerged yet for Carl Fischer, although the logical candidates include musical instrument makers such as Yamaha and Steinway/Selmer.

GKN to strengthen 'powder met' business with US deal

BY PAUL DURMAN

GKN, the automotive engineering group, is making its first important strategic move since C.K. Chow took over as chief executive four months ago by spending £352 million to strengthen its powder metal business.

"Powder met" is becoming the favoured manufacturing method for many metal components, since it offers lightness and strength. The process involves pressing powdered metal in a mould and then heat-treating the result.

GKN is planning to buy Sinter Metals of Cleveland,

Ohio, paying £238 million for Sinter's shares and taking on its net debt of £114 million. Mr Chow said the deal will make the group the world leader in this important technology.

The British group already has a £60 million business with plants in the UK and Italy, and a joint venture in India. The addition of Sinter, which employs more than 3,000 people at 18 plants in North America, Germany and Sweden, will give the enlarged operation annual sales of about £327 million.

GKN expects the deal to

improve its earnings in the first 12 months. Nick Cunningham, analyst at Barclays de Zoete Wedd, said this effectively meant GKN was acquiring Sinter's technology at no cost. The City liked the deal, and GKN saw its shares climb 40p to 951p.

Sinter has more than doubled in size through £215 million of purchases last December. So although it made profits of \$15 million on sales of \$112 million last year, on a pro forma basis the enlarged company would have made \$38 million on sales of \$373 million. Sinter made a

share issue to raise \$50 million only last month.

Mr Chow said he did not think Sinter had overstretched itself, but "the business will grow a lot faster" with the help of GKN's financial strength and international reach. Sinter's management are to remain with the company.

GKN is offering \$37 for each Sinter share, well above the previous market price of \$27. GKN has the backing of shareholders holding 43 per cent of Sinter's shares.

Tempus, page 20

Large taking leave during inquiry

PETER LARGE, the Hambros director who advised Andrew Regan on his abortive £1.2 billion bid for the Co-operative Wholesale Society, has asked to be relieved of his duties at the bank during an inquiry by Norton Rose, the solicitors, into the affair.

Meanwhile, Galileo, the company set up by Andrew Regan to make the bid, went into voluntary liquidation yesterday. The CWS, which has been pursuing Galileo for damages, intends to apply to Ernst & Young, the liquidator, to register as a creditor.

Story, page 28

already been drafted. He added: "We have been very concerned about the recent events and the potential bid for the Co-operative movement."

Parliamentary support for the planned bid should be strong. The number of MPs who are likely to be elected under the banner of the Labour Co-operative movement could rise to 24 in today's poll, compared with 15 in the last Parliament, including candidates in England, Scotland and Wales.

Those MPs would be backed by four Co-op peers, who include Lord Graham of Edmonton. There are also six Co-op members of the European Parliament and these are led by Pauline Green, the high-profile leader of the So-

Generali becomes owner of racehorse

BY JASON NISSE

THE London office of Generali, the giant Italian insurance group, has become the owner of Cigar, the champion American racehorse, after paying \$25 million to the stallion's owners because of its infertility.

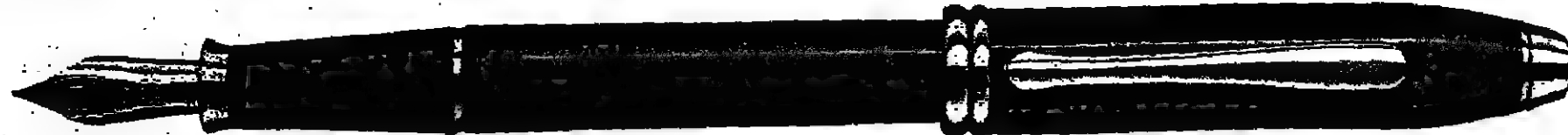
Cigar is the reigning US horse of the year, having won more than \$10 million in prize money after a record 16 successive wins. But his performance was off when he was put out to stud late last year. In spite of being introduced to 31 mares at the Ashford Stud in Versailles, Kentucky, Cigar has failed to impregnate any.

Generali's underwriters have now agreed to pay out the \$25 million, the policy having required Cigar to fail with just 20 mares. The largest recipient of the payout is Coolmore Stud Group, which bought a 75 per cent interest in Cigar from his owner Allen Paulson, the aviation tycoon, last year.

As part of the deal, Generali has now become Cigar's owner and is planning to put him out to stud again. Peter Trend, Generali's bloodstock underwriter, is flying to Kentucky to assess the situation.

"The first thing to do is to move Cigar away from the glare of publicity that he has been under of late," said Mr Trend. "We hope that the vets will be able to find an answer and that Cigar will be able to sire foals, in due course."

The Ashford Stud has now identified up to 85 suitable mares for Cigar, though the cost of each introduction is put at \$75,000. As Cigar is rated as the best racehorse since Citation in the 1930s, Generali will be hoping for some success to cut its losses.



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Increase in repossession court cases

By SARA MCCONNELL

MORTGAGE lenders started action through the county courts to repossess 18,614 homes in the first quarter of this year, an increase of more than 1,000 over the final quarter of 1996. The rise is the first for 12 months and will fuel renewed fears that lenders are taking advantage of rising house prices to repossess and sell off properties that they could not have sold in the recession.

Yesterday's repossession figures from the Lord Chancellor's Department coincided with the latest monthly house price index from the Nationwide Building Society. The figures show a year-on-year rise compared with April 1996 of 8.9 per cent and a month-on-month rise of 0.4 per cent since March. The monthly index from the Halifax, due out at the end of this week, is expected to show similar rises. Both lenders argue that a continuing shortage of property for sale is fuelling price rises, especially in London and the South East.

Lenders have consistently denied that they held back from repossessing properties during the recession because

they knew they could not sell them on, waiting for a market rise. Figures from the Council of Mortgage Lenders have shown falls in the numbers of people repossessed every year since the peak in 1991. The number of orders granted in the county court fell to 14,869 in the first quarter of 1997, compared with 15,084 in the previous quarter.

The CML argues that better arrears management has allowed more lenders to negotiate payment deals with borrowers and that the improving housing market has enabled more borrowers struggling with payments to trade down out of trouble.

Peter Williams, deputy director general of the Council of Mortgage Lenders said: "We have had no indication from our members that they are repossessing more properties as the market rises. It is very mixed." Some lenders had a policy of repossessing quickly while others were prepared to let more arrears build up, said Mr Williams.

The rise in numbers of repossession actions through the county courts could also be due to administrative delays.

Restructure at Signet forces delay in results

By JASON NISSE

SIGNET, the jewellery chain formerly known as Ratners, has been forced to delay publication of its full-year results by up to three weeks because of problems finalising its financial reconstruction.

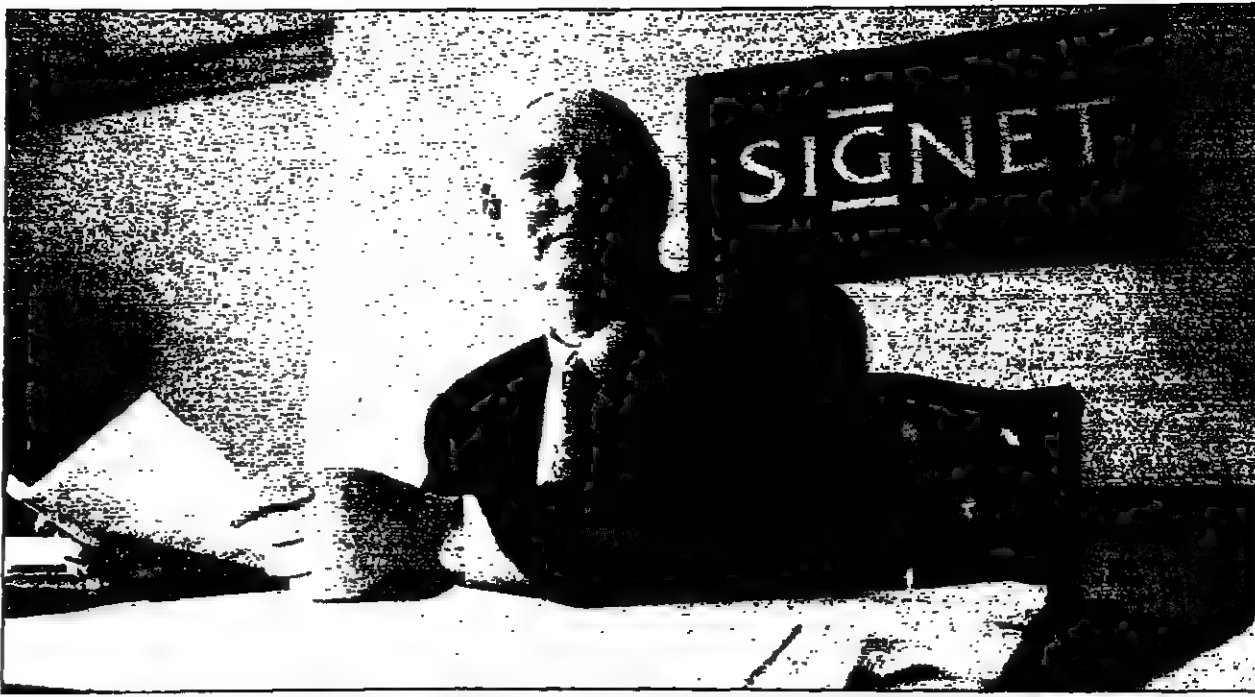
The shake-up is to convert the group's four classes of preference shares into ordinary shares, getting rid of more than £150 million of unpaid dividends. The reconstruction will give preference shareholders over three quarters of the resulting share capital.

However, the US Securities & Exchange Commission, which regulates many of the preference share issues as they were made in New York, has bombarded Signet with queries about the conversion.

"They just can't seem to get their head round the idea of swapping these shares into British securities," said a financier close to the deal.

The talks have lasted more than two months and have held up the issuing of Signet's results. These are expected to show a doubling in pre-tax profit to around £50 million.

Signet, whose chairman is James McAdam, had a good Christmas with the upmarket Ernest Jones enjoying a 9.7 per cent sales increase and the downmarket H Samuel a 2.5 per cent rise.



James McAdam is expected to reveal a doubling in pre-tax profits to about £50 million when Signet finally reports

Large on leave for Regan inquiry

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

PETER LARGE, the Hambros director who advised Andrew Regan on his abortive £1.2 billion bid for the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS), was yesterday relieved of his duties at the bank. He will not return until Norton Rose, the solicitor, completes its enquiry into the affair.

Hambros, which settled out of court this week with CWS, said it had agreed to a request from Mr Large to relieve him

of his duties "to enable him to concentrate upon giving full attention to the enquiry".

Galileo, the company set up by Mr Regan to make the bid, went into voluntary liquidation yesterday. There is expected to be money left for shareholders but this could be eaten up by an application from CWS, which is pursuing Galileo for damages, to register as a creditor. Jason Elles, a partner at Ernst & Young, was appointed to carry out the liquidation less than a week

after the bid was called off. The liquidation should bring the shares in Lanica Trust, Mr Regan's investment vehicle, closer to returning to trading on the stock exchange. HSBC

James Capel, Lanica's broker, said it could not see "what further impediment there is to a relisting".

More than £10 million was put into Galileo by Lanica, Killick & Co, Jupiter and Schroders. Mr Elles said there is enough left to pay the millions of pounds of debts.

Schroders yesterday sent a letter to its institutional investment clients in which it denied that it had at any time seen confidential CWS documents.

Schroders invested a total of £1.8 million in both Lanica and Galileo last December through two unit trusts managed by Schroder Investment Management. Separately, £11,000 was invested in Lanica a month earlier by three Schroder employees before they knew of Lanica's decision to form Galileo.

SFA green light for Fidelity Brokerage

By ROBERT MILLER

A CITY watchdog is today expected to give Fidelity Brokerage, the retail stockbroker arm of the world's largest fund manager, the green light to sign up new clients again and a chance to recoup an estimated £30 million in lost business.

Fidelity is also expected to be handed down a six-figure fine by the Securities and Futures Authority. Last night lawyers from Fidelity and the SFA were still in talks over the size of the fine, although the watchdog is expected to say that it will continue to keep a close eye on the broking firm. If an agreement is not reached, however, then an announcement could be delayed for several days.

In October last year the SFA ordered Fidelity Brokerage to cease taking on new business until January after receiving hundreds of complaints from investors. The ban was then extended for a further three months after the watchdog said it was not satisfied with Fidelity's progress in resolving the issues which began when the broking firm switched to a new computer and administration system last May. Many divided cheques failed to reach the right bank accounts at the correct time.

Pennington, page 29

BAT INDUSTRIES

Underlying profit increase of 6%

Three months unaudited results to 31 March

	1997	1996
PRE-TAX PROFIT	£591m	£590m
EARNINGS PER SHARE	11.3p	11.4p

- Underlying profit rose by 6 per cent with satisfactory progress from most of our businesses. However, pre-tax profit was adversely affected by a £22 million provision for the future closure of a cigarette factory in Germany and the impact of exchange rate movements.
- Total trading profit from financial services rose by 3 per cent to £266 million, with the general business slightly ahead at £142 million and the life companies making further progress, at £124 million.
- Tobacco profit of £363 million would have risen by 8 per cent but for the factory closure provision, which brought the increase down to 2 per cent. Total Group cigarette volumes rose slightly to 167 billion.
- "As I said at the Annual General Meeting last week, if the strength of sterling persists, it may well continue to hold back our headline results in 1997. The Board, however, has confidence in the Group's ability to improve results at the underlying level, just as we have in the first quarter."

Lord Cairns, Chairman

The full quarterly report is being posted to shareholders and copies are available from the Company Secretary, B.A.T. Industries p.l.c., Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0NL.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Hollinger offers to buy rest of Southam

HOLLINGER CANADIAN PUBLISHING, the newspaper company that is controlled by Conrad Black, yesterday bid £392 million (£405 million) for the shares of the Southam media group that Mr Black does not already own. The offer, if successful, will consolidate Hollinger's position as the dominant newspaper owner in Canada.

Hollinger, which is the ultimate owner of *The Daily Telegraph*, owns 50.45 per cent of Southam and has offered £13.50 in cash and £10 in Hollinger non-voting special shares for each minority share. Southam is the biggest newspaper chain in Canada, with daily titles in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Ottawa and Montreal. The Hollinger offer had been expected. Hollinger has wanted outright control of Southam for some time. Its ambition to gain a free hand in turning the company around. The newspapers are not highly profitable in spite of the lack of competition in most of their markets.

EU approves coal aid

GOVERNMENT cash worth £891 million to meet liabilities left from the sell-off of British Coal was yesterday sanctioned by the European Commission. The money, which will pay for environmental damage caused by mining, fuel entitlements and other obligations to workers, needed approval from Europe under regulations on state aid. The aid has been granted because it raises no competition issues.

□ National Power, the UK's biggest generator, has ordered six million more tonnes of coals from UJB Mining.

Villa offer tops £12m

ASTON VILLA, the Premiership football club seeking a stock market listing, said the total amount subscribed under the public offer of shares is £12.58 million. The company said 454,545 ordinary shares previously placed with institutions were subject to recall to satisfy applications from members of the public at £11 a share. Valid applications were received from 7,708 applicants in respect of 688,780 shares. Applications from full-time employees amounting to 19,620 shares, and from season ticket holders for up to 200 shares, are being allocated in full.

Gallahers split agreed

SHAREHOLDERS in American Brands yesterday approved the demerger of Gallahers, the US group's British tobacco operation. This paves the way for the £2 billion flotation of the business, famous for its Silk Cut and Benson & Hedges brands, later this year. Gallahers is the leading tobacco company in the UK, but is unaffected by the £200 billion deal to settle litigation from smokers in the US. At the same time, shareholders agreed to change the name of the US side to Fortune Brands.

SR Gent considers offers

S R GENT, the clothing manufacturer that supplies Marks & Spencer, has told shareholders that "potential offers for the company are being dealt with" and that a further announcement is expected soon. Shareholders were told in October that the company had received preliminary approaches. Yesterday the company said it lost £901,000 before tax in the half year to December 31, against a £2.8 million profit previously. The interim dividend has been passed and earnings per share of 4.7p fell to losses of 2.6p. The shares rose 4p to 50 1/2 p.

Loss for Whitchurch

WHITCHURCH GROUP, the meat products company, incurred a £4.3 million loss in the year to January 2, reflecting the cost of business closures. There was a £3.5 million charge against losses on discontinued businesses and a £1.57 million write-down of assets and goodwill. In the previous year profits were £600,000. The company said steps had to be taken to contend with adverse market conditions. Turnover was £47.7 million (£48.5 million). Losses were 28.91p a share, against earnings of 2.61p. Again there is no dividend.

Currencies			
Bank	Rate	Bank	Rate
Australia \$	2.15	Bank	Rate
Austria S	13.76	Bank	Rate
Belgium F	60.33	Bank	Rate
Canada \$	1.52	Bank	Rate
Cyprus Cyp	6.875	Bank	Rate
Denmark Kr	11.22	Bank	Rate
France F	6.55	Bank	Rate
Germany DM	1.93	Bank	Rate
Greece Dr	470	Bank	Rate
Hong Kong \$	13.24	Bank	Rate
Iceland Is	127	Bank	Rate
Ireland P	1.11	Bank	Rate
Israel Sh	5.82	Bank	Rate
Italy Lit	2036	Bank	Rate
Japan Yen	220.20	Bank	Rate

□ Testing times ahead for Simpson at GEC □ Dividends could feel the pinch □ City braced for more reforms

Tarzan tackles boardroom jungle

LORD WEINSTOCK is no longer managing director of GEC. Instead, he glories in the title of chairman emeritus. If rumours circulating in the City prove to be true, we may soon learn quite what power attaches to this role.

The theory is that Michael Heseltine has let it be known that he could be very interested in being the next chairman of GEC. Nothing so vulgar as a letter of application has been penned, but those who matter have, apparently, been left in little doubt that Heseltine would care to be considered as a candidate.

This is not to say that the fiery mace-wielder has entirely given up his political ambitions. If the rifts and recriminations within the Tory Party head speedily towards a leadership election, the likelihood is that Heseltine would feel obliged, for the good of us all, to offer his services.

But if leading the Opposition is not to be his role, then being the chairman of one of Britain's leading industrial forces would not be a bad alternative. However, the GEC boardroom is said to be divided as to whether he is the right man for the job. In particular, the chairman emeritus and his managing director are thought to be taking opposing views.

For George Simpson, poached from Lucas as Lord Weinstock's appointed successor, the issue could assume huge importance.

There were always those who doubted whether Arnold Weinstock could relinquish totally the fierce grip in which he held GEC for so long, and this could become the test of that.

The current chairman, Lord Prior, has more than justified his own leap from former Cabinet minister to top industrialist. He has been a highly effective international salesman for the group, working long hours and, say insiders, winning contracts. Apparently, the combination of having been a minister and being a peer of the realm still carries weight with some potentates, and Jim Prior is a pleasant and persuasive sort of a chap.

But Michael Heseltine is a very different character with very different ambitions. If he were to take the helm at GEC, he would want to make his mark on the company. And could he be relied upon to be the best of ambassadors for the company?

George Simpson has no doubt been weighing up those issues as he ponders whom he would like to see as his next, theoretical, boss. With GEC facing some major strategic issues, including

the future of its involvement with Thomson in France and the long-awaited link-up with BAE, the company needs a strong chairman. But it will have to be someone who can work with Simpson, not against him.

Lord Weinstock can be forgiven for continuing to feel a proprietorial interest in the company which he steered for so long. However, he retired last year and it was on that basis that Simpson joined. If the board was to support him against Simpson in the issue of who should be chairman, Simpson, and his shareholders, would have reason to feel aggrieved.

Brown may call on City to bridge gap

THE zig-zagging of the FT-SE yesterday demonstrated that our markets are currently more influenced by what goes on in Wall Street than who should inhabit Downing Street.

But the sangrinity with which they appear to be discounting a Labour victory in today's polls may not take long to evaporate.

PENNINGTON



A rise in interest rates is already written into the equation, but there are other measures which Gordon Brown may have in mind which have so far not occurred to a City bent on putting an optimistic gloss on what is now deemed inevitable.

The new Chancellor of the Exchequer may want to uphold Labour's promises of support for business, but his overwhelming need will be to raise extra cash. The wheeze of the windfall tax will not bridge the gap for a Labour administration to live up to its promises. And the avuncular out-going Chancellor is not such a paragon as to have ensured that the books awaiting his successor are exactly as he would wish them. Finding other

ways of bumping up his tax revenues is the challenge that will face the new Chancellor.

Given the promises that have been made, personal taxation is almost, though not entirely, out of bounds. So it is to business that Mr Brown will be looking for his increased income, in the full, but unspoken, knowledge that in hitting corporate earnings, he will in reality be hitting the income and savings of individuals but at one remove.

If, as is likely, corporation tax is raised from the traditionally low levels that have prevailed in Britain, dividends will rapidly feel the pinch. The drawback of advance corporation tax, which Brown is said to favour on the grounds that simple voters will not believe this obscure fiscal measure has anything to do with them, will cut the income to pension funds and charities, and thus to their beneficiaries.

The possibilities of both measures have been much discussed in City boardrooms, yet the near certainty is that their imposition would be greeted with shrieks of shock and horror. Share prices would suddenly lose their

surprising sangrinity. The old injunction to sell in May and go away may prove, once again, to make sense.

Labour eye on end of Fidelity affair

THE expected conclusion today of Fidelity Brokerage's brush with the Securities and Futures Authority will be watched with more than a passing interest by Labour's Treasury team.

If, as expected, Gordon Brown is installed in the Treasury tomorrow, his ministers will have already begun work on their promised reforms to City regulation. Sources close to Tony Blair, the Labour leader, have already indicated that Alistair Darling will be confirmed as Chief Secretary to the Treasury, while Mike O'Brien is widely tipped for promotion to Economic Secretary. It is Mr O'Brien, who has risen rapidly through the ranks since entering Parliament in 1992, who will oversee reforms to the way in which City watchdogs operate and, some way

down the line, a rewrite of the Financial Services Act.

In finding Fidelity the SFA must strike a balance between making the sum big enough to note the regulator's displeasure and the fact that the publicity has undoubtedly been financially damaging.

The first step by a new Treasury team will be to appoint a successor to Sir Andrew Large as chairman of the Securities and Investments Board.

The chairman's deputy may well come from the present watchdog system and front-runners would be Phillip Thorpe at Imro, Andrew Winckler, SIB chief executive, Colette Bowe, of the PIA, and Nick Durlacher, of the SFA. So wrapping up the Fidelity incident, and on time, is more than just another disciplinary case.

The penny drops

IT has taken that essentially practical breed of people, the shopkeepers, to point out that if the single currency is to become a reality, it will require more than the signatures of politicians. If EMU is to be introduced, then early decisions need to be taken on its physical form. Businesses can convert their systems, but if millions of slot machines are to be adapted, then some serious issues need resolving, and soon.

BAT holds fire over litigation insurance

By MARIANNE CURPHY

BAT INDUSTRIES remained tight-lipped yesterday over independent research suggesting it could offload the cost of its tobacco litigation in the US onto its insurers.

The bill for any court cases it lost could be recouped from insurance companies who provided cover since the 1990s, according to Schroders, the securities and investment house. These include Commercial Union and Royal Sun Alliance (RSA) based in the UK. Some estimates put the bill for tobacco companies at £200 billion.

Schroders' research into the historical liability coverage bought by BAT and other tobacco manufacturers, including Philip Morris, has uncovered exclusions in policies that it believes are so loosely worded that they would not hold water in court.

Martin Broughton, chief executive of BAT, unveiling first quarter results yesterday, said: "We do not intend to comment on... possible insurance coverage for tobacco litigation. We wish to protect the company's assets and anything we say could prejudice our position."

He reiterated comments made by Lord Cairns, BAT's chairman, at this week's annual meeting that the issue was



BAT's Martin Broughton, left, and David Allvey

"highly complex both factually and legally" and affected many insurers in 50 different US states.

RSA said: "This is one of a number of potential liabilities

which we monitor." CU said: "Our exposure is limited by exclusion clauses and the aggregate limits on the policies we wrote." But the issue has caused

friction between BAT and both Schroders and one of BAT's major shareholders, Persimmon, which has more than £100 million invested in BAT.

Paul Hodges, who conducted the research, declined to comment yesterday, but Neil Woodford, who runs Perpetual's High Income fund, said: "It is fair for shareholders to expect more clarification on the issue. I am not asking the company to prejudice future legal proceedings, but we are entitled to know more."

Mr Broughton unveiled a pre-tax profit of £591 million for the three months to March 1997, broadly unchanged from the £590 million in the same period last year. He reiterated fears that sterling's strength may lead to a downturn in pre-tax result for the current year.

BAT's cigarette brands lost ground in the US as a result of aggressive price-cutting by rival Philip Morris. BAT shares were 3p lower at 52½p. CU was 3½p down at 682½p, while RSA rose 10p to 488p.

BAT's total trading profit from financial services rose 3 per cent to £26 million and tobacco profits of £363 million would have risen 8 per cent but for the provision for the future closure of a cigarette factory in Germany, which brought the increase down to 2 per cent.

Tempos, page 30

Rebels out in force at BAe meeting

UP TO 150 campaigners ambushed British Aerospace's annual meeting yesterday to protest at the company's arms sales to Indonesia.

The growing band of protesters who buy single company shares to gain entry to annual meetings also delivered a sizeable vote against two directors up for re-election.

Lord Hollick, a non-executive, was opposed by investors speaking for 6.56 per cent of shares and Mike Turner, head of the civil aviation division, got a 8.47 per cent no-vote.

The meeting lasted three hours and was dominated by questions on arms sales to undemocratic regimes. Protesters were removed from the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, Westminster.

European difficulties prompt BICC warning

By OLIVER AUGUST

A PROFIT warning by BICC, the cable and construction group, relating to persistent problems at its European utility cables operations sparked a 7 per cent fall in its share price.

Viscount Weir, chairman, told investors at the annual meeting that interim results are likely to be weaker than expected. Six months ago the company raised £170 million via a rights issue.

He said the problems originated in "Germany and Italy, where demand and price levels have deteriorated further and damaging structural over-capacity now exists". He added: "This situation is unlikely to change and largely reflects the tight economic policies continental governments feel obliged to pursue."

The strength of sterling has

not had a negative effect on BICC. Losses in pound transactions were offset by additional currency gains from profits in Australian dollars. Viscount Weir said the problem was specific to the European power utility sector. "Our other worldwide cable activities and Balfour Beatty are so far this year performing

Tempos 30

in line with expectations," he said.

The rights issue was used to invest in high-tech cables in the UK, Europe and Asia. The group said the rights issue was not affected and pay-backs should come on stream later this year.

A spokesman said: "There is

one black spot that is having a negative impact." But while the group maintains that there are "no reasons for altering the general outlook for the group", analysts downgraded full-year profit forecasts from around £165 million to around £145 million.

In 1996 £82 million of exceptional costs from a previous bout of belt-tightening helped to push the group £67 million into the red, against a 1995 profit of £131 million.

Viscount Weir failed to reassure investors that a turnaround could save full-year profits, saying: "This situation is unlikely to change." But outside Germany, Italy and Australia, demand for high-voltage cables is said to be picking up. The shares fell 17p to 230½p. Rights issue shares were offered at 270p.

BioMedica settles with Stockton

By PAUL DURMAN

OXFORD BioMedica, the gene technology company whose arrival on Alternative Investment Market six months ago was a flop, has settled with the two investors who failed to take up their underwriting commitments.

Stockton Trading, one of the sub-underwriters, has agreed to pay £100,000 for 125,000 shares at the November placing price of 80p. The firm's original commitment was for about £650,000.

Oxford BioMedica has put on hold its legal action against Kaj Kjellquist, the other would-be investor, because he faces bankruptcy proceedings. The failed underwriting prompted a collapse in Oxford BioMedica's share price on the first day of trading.

The shares recovered 8p to 52½p yesterday on research suggesting a breakthrough in the company's work on treating cancer.

Wickes sells off continental chain

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

WICKES, the do-it-yourself chain that spent most of last year caught up in an accounting scandal, has finally sold its continental retailing business.

After months of negotiations with several parties, Bricorama, a privately owned French DIY company, has agreed to pay about £7.5 million for the 39 stores in The Netherlands, Belgium and France.

In the year ended December 31, Wickes Continental made a pre-tax loss of £12.3 million on turnover of £105 million. Net assets were £4.8 million.

Bricorama will also assume £6.4 million of finance leases on the balance sheet of Wickes Continental. After expenses, the deal should result in a reduction of about £12.5 million in the consolidated net indebtedness of Wickes. Completion is expected shortly.

Bill Grimsey, chief executive, said that the sale "represents a further significant step

in the turnaround plan for Wickes".

He added: "The refinancing of the group is now complete with the elimination of a further £12.5 million of debt from our balance sheet as a result of the disposal. We can now focus fully on rebuilding Wickes in the UK from a sound financial base."

Mr Grimsey, who took over the job from Henry Sweetbaum, said that the sale to Bricorama was "very neat" as there was no breaking up of the continental head office, and the business could carry on as a going concern.

Wickes, whose former management is now under investigation by the Serious Fraud Office, has now shed all its overseas interests, having withdrawn from a South African business in February. In the UK it now trades from 122 stores. It intends to return to a modest opening programme from next year.

Halifax to sell Colleys

By ADAM JONES

THE Halifax Building Society is disposing of the Colleys chain of property surveyors through a mixture of sales and mergers with its own-brand valuation offices.

Colleys has about 140 offices. An unspecified number have been quietly on the market for several weeks, with the rest earmarked for merger with Halifax Valuation Services.

Several companies have shown an interest. The Halifax said the sale had nothing to do its flotation.

On Tuesday another demutualising building society, the Alliance & Leicester, announced that it had sold its commercial estate agency.

The building society has now fully withdrawn from estate agency. It had written off £40 million for the purpose in 1995, of which the latest sale accounted for just a small part.

Halifax service, page 33

Greenhills censured by exchange

By FRASER NELSON

GREENHILLS, the restaurant group that fell into liquidation in December, has been censured by the London Stock Exchange for its failure to announce a series of events which preceded its cash crisis (See Pennington, this page).

The company, backed by Justin Hayward from the Moody Blues and two members of the Dire Straits, has been accused of being quick to disclose news of new developments but slow to inform the market when the deals fell through.

The censure is understood to relate to

the company's failure to announce that a contract to distribute Russian Dawn Vodka had collapsed and that its plans to open a restaurant with Madame Tussaud's had been cancelled.

It is also failing to disclose that a company controlled by John Gilbert, one of its directors, fitted out its Thunder Road restaurant in London's West End.

The exchange emphasised that its criticism was levelled at the company itself and not the directors — although analysts were puzzled as to where the distinction was drawn.

The company, which was one of the

first entrants on the Alternative Investment Market, was formed by Brian Copsey, a Monaco-based financier who had bought a cheap lease in London's Trocadero centre. Mr Copsey was also a director of Alpha Omikron, which is one of the three companies to have been ejected from the Alternative Investment Market.

The company's investors had hoped for a reverse takeover by Browns, the Covent Garden nightclub, which was in talks with Greenhills just before the company fell into receivership.

City diary, page 31

Now the politics are over how do the policies stand up?

In The Economist tomorrow we examine the pressing issues facing the next Prime Minister

The Economist

STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Soaring Dow fails to soothe London nerves

SHARE prices were suffering from a bout of pre-election jitters last night after failing to capitalise on the new mood of optimism sweeping Wall Street on interest rates.

London responded positively first thing to a sizzling performance overnight that saw the Dow Jones industrial average enjoy its biggest one-day gain for more than ten years. Confidence that an imminent rise in US interest rates could be postponed followed Tuesday's subdued employment cost index and durable goods numbers.

Share prices in the City hit a new all time high of 4,460.5, but the FT-SE 100 index subsequently suffered a relapse after evidence of stronger than expected growth in the US economy during the first quarter.

This was eventually countered by a dip in the Chicago Purchasing Managers' Index and, after a cautious start, the Dow Jones was again powering away and, at one stage, was sporting another 100-point rise.

But it came too late to make any impact on London, where the index clawed back a 10-point fall to finish 2.8 up at 4,430.0. Almost one billion shares changed hands.

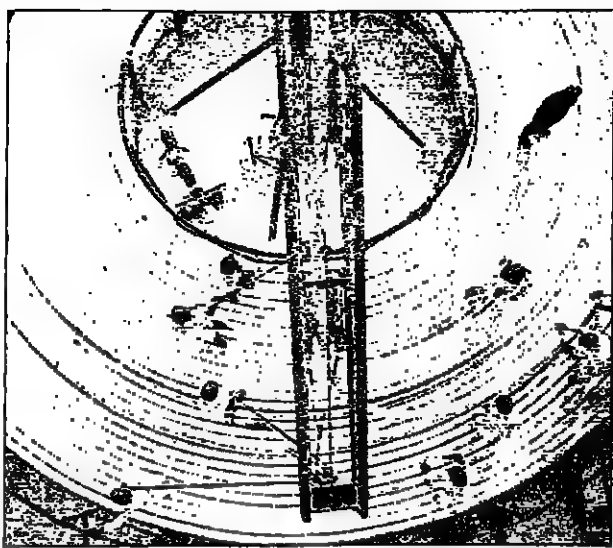
Brokers responded positively to the news that GKN is to acquire Sinter Metals of Ohio for \$570 million (£352 million). Sinter is the world's biggest supplier of precision pressed powder metal parts. The shares rose 40p to 951p.

The unexpected profits warning from BICC, which sent the shares tumbling 17p to 230 1/2p, had the analysts scrambling to downgrade their profit numbers for the current year. The company warned shareholders at the annual meeting that profits for the first six months would be lower than at first thought.

Brokers said the situation in European power utility cables had deteriorated even further. The news from BICC had a knock-on effect at Delta, with the price losing 4 1/2p to 340 1/2p.

LucasVarity firmed 2p to 185 1/2p as ABN Amro Hoare Govett snapped up another two million shares at 187p as part of its share buyback programme. This takes the number of shares repurchased to 15.5 million, or 1 per cent.

It looks as if Cadbury Schweppes is losing ground to Coca-Cola and Pepsi Cola in



A profit warning knocked 17p off BICC, the cable maker

the soft drinks wars. US sales of Dr Pepper grew by 5 per cent in the first three months of the year, but 7-Up declined 2 per cent. Overall sales were up just 1 per cent. The shares finished 10p lower at 513 1/2p.

EMI gave up 20p at £12.24 after Henderson Crosthwaite, the broker, hustled a dinner with the company and institutional investors.

After chasing the banks higher, attention switched to the commodities where there is still plenty of speculation. Best performances were seen in Royal Sun Alliance, up 10p at 488 1/2p on interest from Salomon Brothers, and General Accident, up 3p at 880p, and wanted by Merrill Lynch.

Northern Ireland Electricity moved up 4p to 400p with the help of a "buy" recommendation from BZW. It is positive about the group's joint venture with United Utilities and the recent ruling on price cuts issued by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. United Utilities eased 1p to 678 1/2p.

The decision of Peter Levine and a consortium of investors not to acquire a controlling

stake in Optometrics came too late on Tuesday to affect the shares. But they opened sharply lower yesterday, touching 12p before closing 4 1/2p down at 14p.

Cautious comments made earlier this week by HSBC James Capel, the broker, continued to prove a drag on Eurotherm, with the price finishing a further 2 1/2p lower at

mentioned. It rose 3p to 266 1/2p.

Air London International was a flat market falling 10p to 233 1/2p after Beeson Gregory, the broker, downgraded its recommendation from a "buy" to a "hold".

On AIM, Oxford Biomedics stood out with a rise of 8p at 52 1/2p after announcing it was making headway in the battle against cancer. The group is developing a new anti-tumour gene therapy to fight persistent breast, colorectal and ovarian cancers.

Shares of Boosey & Hawkes soared 70p to 807 1/2p as the "for sale" sign went up on the company. Carl Fischer, who owns 45.3 per cent of the music publisher, is looking for a buyer for his stake.

Dragons Health Clubs got off to a flying start in first-time dealings on AIM. Placed at 100p, the price opened at 122 1/2p before closing at its best of the day with a premium of 26p at 126p.

The big drug companies were up and running, hoping for some good news from Glaxo Wellcome, up 25 1/2p at £12 1/2p. The group is due to give an update tomorrow on research and development.

Nigel Barnes at Merrill Lynch says that Glaxo Wellcome is arguably up with events, but he remains bullish about the drug companies.

In March Merrill Lynch set a target price of £20.50 for Zeneca and seemed happy to run with that. The shares eased 3p to £18.50 1/2p. But there was support for SmithKline Beecham, up 20p at 90 1/2p, and Cortes International, 20p better at 287 1/2p.

GILT-EDGED: There were few signs of last-minute election jitters as prices soared by around £1 at the longer end. Brokers are convinced that a landslide Labour victory is the order of the day.

Much of the demand was fuelled by futures-led buying and a strong performance by US Treasury bonds. The June series of the long gilt rose £1 1/2 to £110 1/2. Treasury 8 per cent 2021 soared £1 1/2 to £104 1/2, while at the shorter end Treasury 7.25 per cent 2007 was £1 1/2 better at £98 1/2.

NEW YORK: Shares held on to late morning gains after buying momentum carried over from Tuesday's sharp rise. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 74.25 points higher at 7,036.28.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 7,036.28 (+74.25)
S&P Composite 802.29 (+8.24)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 19,019.91 (+131.50)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 12,903.70 (+302.88)

Amsterdam:
EOD Index Closed

Sydney:
ASX 2,888.00 (+4.94)

Frankfurt:
DAX 3,438.07 (+54.89)

Singapore:
Straits 2,004.26 (+14.36)

Brussels:
General 12,515.17 (+69.56)

Paris:
CAC-40 26,340.40 (+36.40)

Zurich:
SIX 1,003.80 (+1.30)

London:
FTSE 100 4,430.00 (+2.80)

FTSE 250 4,498.70 (+3.30)

FTSE 100 2,168.70 (+0.30)

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TEMPUS

No smoking policy

THE silence was deafening from BAT yesterday in the face of irate questions from investors about the significance of some 750 insurance policies taken out by its US tobacco arm. The prospect of a historic court battle as tobacco barons sue insurance fat cats sounds delicious but the drama is a long way off. BAT's lawyers are no doubt poring over the contracts but the company is in no hurry to claim from its insurers. So far, it has been winning cases brought by smokers and a battle against the insurance industry could double or treble its legal costs.

Aside from costs, BAT has other reasons not to call on its insurers. Were BAT to make a valid claim on a policy, its US insurer would have the right to take control of the tobacco company's defence against the plaintiff smokers. BAT has defended

itself aggressively in the past and will be loath to hand the task over to insurers who have different priorities and might prefer to settle claims quickly. Worse still, discovery rules in US law would enable insurers to obtain unlimited access to BAT's internal documents, some of which might prove to be highly sensitive over the issue of liability.

BAT is being dragged further and further into the mire of the US courts. The tobacco settlement recently mooted by BAT's rivals, Philip Morris and Nabisco is unlikely to provide any real immunity from future lawsuits, and BAT must be actively reviewing the question of demerging the tobacco arm. The irony is that on an underlying basis, tobacco profits are growing faster than insurance. Smoking may be bad for you but it has yet to really hurt BAT.

Grampian

WHAT is one to make of a company that makes most of its money from woollen jumpers but also sells a product to remove sea lice from farmed salmon?

Stop forward Grampian Holdings, which is probably best described, albeit unhelpfully, as a Scottish mink-conglomerate. A year ago, Grampian was expected to sell its 25 per cent stake in Edinburgh Woollen Mills, the chain of over 200 shops which in Scotland hawk tartan products to tourists but in England mainly sells woollens. A more focused Grampian was to concentrate on transport and veterinary pharmaceuticals.

Instead, to the fury of some institutions, the company bought the whole of EWM. They rewarded the change of strategy by dumping

ing the shares, causing the price to fall from a peak in September of 141 1/2p to a trough in December of 110p.

Grampian stock has never fully recovered but yesterday's news on trading makes the continuing bearish view hard to justify. Only a proportion of EWM profits have been included, but the figures are very promising.

With like-for-like sales rising 12 per cent.

On a pro-forma basis, EWM accounts for around 65 per cent of profits. Although the other divisions are trading well, Grampian still looks a ragbag of businesses, difficult to value.

Nonetheless, the shares are a buy and a few disposals could lead to a re-rating.

Grampian Holdings share price

May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr

FT-SE all-share index (rebased)

Grampian Holdings share price

May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr

FT-SE all-share index (rebased)

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May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr

FT-SE all-share index (rebased)

Grampian Holdings share price

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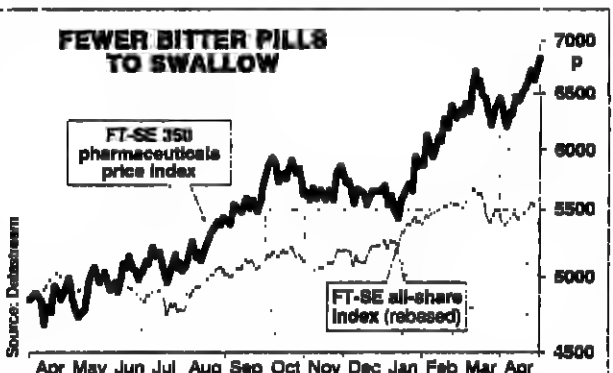
Grampian Holdings share price

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COMMODITIES

ICE-100 (London 5.00pm)

CRUDE OILS \$/barrel FOB

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ICE-100 (London 5.00pm)

CRUDE OILS \$/barrel FOB

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Long Gilt

German Govt Bond (Bund)

Italian Govt Bond (BTP)

Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)

Three Mth Sterling

Three Mth Eurodollar

Three Mth Euroyen

Three Mth ECU

Five-year haul up the green mountain



GRAHAM SEAL

Tony Blair performed an essential democratic task in creating an easily digestible alternative to Conservative. From about halfway through its 18-year term of office, the Government seemed to become convinced by its experience of anti-inflation drives and privatisation that short-term unpopularity was a sure sign of virtue in policy. That was understandable after the trouncing of the 1970s, but it isn't necessarily so. And this mindset removes the key check on incompetence, unfettered ideology and influence-peddling.

The nation is doubtless grateful to Mr Blair. Labour and Conservatives have converged so closely in their policy aims, in the process, however, that the election argument has focused even more than usual on attitudes, rival managerial claims and differences in means. For voters in England, though not in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, the only truly divisive issue has been States' rights versus federal powers in Europe. As *The Times*' election verdict demonstrated, even this was not properly

reflected in differences between the two main parties' programmes. Over the past six weeks, this column has tried to look at the consequences of this passive consensus. They have allowed leading parties to get away with having no convincing strategy on so many economic, financial and lifestyle issues: poverty, the incidence of taxation, crime, transport and pensions, as well as the environment. Today's election will decide none of these or other real-life issues.

Nowhere is this truer than in matters environmental or "green". Even critical campaigners have given John Gummer, Environment Secretary since 1993, some credit for initiatives on recycling, pollution and protecting the countryside, as well as making Britain a positive force in European and global pacts. Their complaint is that he failed to spread their message round the Cabinet table,

let alone through the Treasury and Whitehall. So the M3 motorway famously ploughs through Twyford Down, rather than running under it, state-directed competition obliged some power stations to turn off their air-scrubbers and there is no masterplan for defunct North Sea oil platforms.

Labour wears yet brighter green badges and has some more ambitious targets. But there is even less sign that they will be imbued departmental programmes, or even be compatible with them.

Take the worsening drought, which was not evident when water industry charges and investment plans were drawn up. Frank Dobson, Shadow Environment Secretary, has pledged a water summit. But he has ruled out compulsory metering, seemingly the best way to control demand.

He has a good political case. Metering favours Mayfair million-

aires (as well as poor single pensioners) but hits big families on modest incomes. So compulsory metering would either hit millions on tight budgets or force a rise in public spending to compensate them. Mr Dobson has neatly focused instead on leaks, but that will not do for long. Leaks were given low priority because, once the industry improves its house-

keeping, they become disproportionately expensive to stop. That means customers would ultimately pay more, unless improvements to the waters are downgraded.

Environmental objectives often do conflict with other worthy aims. If house prices are not to soar and housebuilders and housing associations are to fulfil the projected need for four million new dwellings at modest cost, they will have to build on open land and generate vast amounts more car traffic.

Green aims even conflict with each other. By far the worst Western European threat to the global weather balance is the rundown of nuclear power. Bypasses and polluting congestion really are alternatives. Wind farms help the air but scar the landscape. Politicians of every hue now fashionably denigrate the out-of-town supermarkets beloved of us Middle-Englanders. Yet few rail

against new out-of-town sports stadiums. Some conflicts can be resolved; others cannot and something has to give. The danger is that green issues will be promoted only to save Treasury cash, or that politically correct gestures will make do for substance.

The best way to harmonise economic and green priorities as much as possible is to plan ahead with industry and commerce. The Environmental Industries Commission, whose members make or instal anti-pollution equipment and the like, is trying to do this with the Department of Trade and Industry. Programmes to develop new processes and equipment, and then to raise legal standards here and across the EU at a manageable pace, can promote British firms and allow market forces to show where gains can be made to best economic advantage.

Programmes are needed for the

North Sea and for power stations, although here, as in transport, UK initiatives are hampered by the loss of British-owned manufacturers. Britain may be hard put to take the initiative in developing cheap petrol/electric cars.

Tomorrow's government will have no strategy. To acquire one it will at least have to bring together the Trade, Transport and Environment Secretaries, not just hope that green dye will do the trick. As in tax policy or pensions, such huge gaps are frustrating for voters. But they can be a boon to business, as well as for journalists.

If most policies were decided at elections, detailed business experience would count for little. As it is, up to five years of argument and lobbying lie ahead. When government has few firm plans, it is up to the rest of us to suggest acceptable ones. Under the Tories, green campaigners learnt to offer measures that operate through market forces. If the ultimate objective is shared, there are usually many different ways you can choose to climb the mountain.

Would the winner please strike a balance between boom and bust

Lord Alexander of Weedon sets out the terms of a manifesto for business

I am a Conservative, and believe that the achievements of the last Government are in danger of being much under appreciated. But whatever my own views, the company I work for has a long tradition of political neutrality. With more than 120,000 ordinary shareholders and 7 million customers all with their different views, it is only right that we should be so. So it is in this attempted impartial spirit that I give my views of what the business agenda needs for the next five years.

Top of the list must be the need to preserve and reinforce a stable economic environment. The price business and banks paid for the last "boom and bust" economic cycle has seared the souls of a generation of business leaders. Large and small companies agree that stability is critical to all their business planning, investment and financing. The current trends are fairly clear. Manufacturing growth is subdued, partly due to the strong pound. But consumer growth is accelerating. So is wage growth. The labour market is tightening. There are also increasing signs of skills shortages. While it may not help manufacturing, the priority must be to edge up interest rates as promptly as may be necessary to guard against inflation. Let us hope an initial small increase will be enough. But the Government must not hesitate.

We are one of a diminishing number of countries in which interest-rate decisions are taken by politicians. It is, regrettably, no part of the election manifesto to make the Bank of England independent. Ken Clarke has improved transparency and clarified accountability through the publication of minutes of meetings with Eddie George. What is now needed is to take control of monetary policy out of politics. Some day we will perhaps take on board the



Lord Alexander believes there is less between Labour and Conservatives at this election than at any before

evidence of the success of those economies that have done so. But there seems little sign that any prospective government would do this in the near future.

Business also badly needs a constructive approach to Europe. The arguments for our continued participation in the European Union are formidable. To cut the painter and float offshore would be immensely damaging. We need our place in Europe for our trade, as encouragement to inward investment in this country, and for the long-term health of the City of London. The party manifestos make it plain that the chances of being in the first wave of EMU are negligible. But we still must play a constructive role in the discussion on this and issues on the future of which a decision is to be taken under a UK presidency. Any government must also be open-minded about our future participation if EMU is successfully launched. Otherwise we could throw away prospects of exchange-rate stability so important to exporters and importers. We could become a marginal offshore currency, prone to speculation, and carrying higher long-term interest rates. But to stay for long outside a "hard" Euro, if that is how it develops, could do us great damage.

The maintenance of a stable economic environment and a constructive participation in Europe are for me the key to the support that business needs from government. But there are also some important micro-economic tasks. Both parties acknowledge that "Governments do not create jobs, businesses do," and that crucial to tomorrow's jobs will be small businesses. Few would disagree. But we need more than words to provide an environment that encourages growth, risk-taking, innovation and investment. We should build on the supportive record of the last government. They raised the threshold for VAT registration, which currently applies to companies trading above £48,000. There are studies which suggest that this can act as a disincentive to growth. Research has shown, too, that small business owners become conditioned by the experience of their early

years. So if fears of the burden of VAT encourage them to run their businesses and survive on a modest scale of operation in the early years, they are less likely to break out of that mind set and go for growth later on.

At the end of last year, NatWest/Manchester Business School produced a report called *Taxing Expansion*, in which it was suggested that the VAT threshold be raised to £100,000. This would be a real incentive, and, added to vigilance in lessening bureaucracy and regulation, would help developing businesses.

There is another simple step that government could take to help businesses. They need to tackle even more actively the enduring problem of late payment of debt. Right across the last recession and beyond, this was a consistent source of hardship for the small business sector. I have long been in favour of legislation to provide a statutory right to interest on overdue debt, because I believe it will bring out a badly needed change in business culture.

Business, too, needs certainty as to the tax structure so as to plan its investment. The more certain the future, the more likely investors are to take risks. The more certain the future, the more latent entrepreneurs will be awakened. In the last years, business has largely had this certainty. With increases in basic taxation levels ruled out there will be concern as to whether a new Labour Government would stick fully to its pledged support for business. Where will they raise the shortfall to meet spending needs? The windfall tax on utilities does not give too much cause for confidence. It is a doctrinaire tax which, as the Institution of Fiscal Studies has shown, will be horizontally inequitable.

Elsewhere, the minimum wage is attractive as a concept of social equity. But research suggests that many of those who would benefit are not among the poorest. Nor can the fears that employment would be reduced be dismissed. The Social Chapter is an even more unknown quantity. Its basic broad terms are unexceptional

in a civilised society. It is often forgotten that it emphasises the importance of promoting competition. It would be comparatively harmless if left to be implemented at national level under the doctrine of subsidiarity. But it carries the danger that the Commission will force on us directives such as the Working Time Directive.

Nor to enhance prosperity in our society can we ignore the need to provide for our financial security in retirement. Saving levels are currently strong, at just under 13 per cent as opposed to just over 6 per cent in 1988. But we need dramatically to improve the provision for financial security in retirement. The whole topic of pensions has recently received much attention. It is a key issue in the medium term.

According to the IFS, by 2030 basic state pension will be worth just 8 per cent of average male earnings, compared with 20 per cent in the late 1970s and 15 per cent now. The emphasis must move to the individual. The financial services industry will have a large role to play. But it is not just business but our national finances and the welfare of our people which need a government that is prepared to grasp this issue. Imaginative consideration must be given to tax incentive for private pension provision, and immediate and long-term healthcare.

Where does the balance of advantage fall? Both parties have firm commitments on economic stability. The Conservatives have a good record of supporting small business, but Labour are pledged to introduce a statutory right of interest on debt paid late. The Conservatives have a known track record of successful economic management. Labour have not yet had the chance to build one.

One conclusion is that there has never been less between the two parties. Business has less cause to fear from Labour promises than ever before. Ironically, the Conservatives' achievements are the triumph of capitalism and the accelerated burial of socialism by new Labour. So it is not surprising that the business view is no longer monolithic. Whatever business leaders say there is much on which their individual shareholders and employees can and should make up their own minds.

Lord Alexander is chairman of National Westminster Bank

Tadpole that failed to star as frog-prince

Fraser Nelson on a management drive to revive an ailing technology company

Business, as thousands of private investors have learnt to their cost, make poor salesmen. They come to the market with a dazzling new product, convinced their brainchild will be a best seller.

They float and proceed half-mesmerised by their own technical wizardry, little worried if the sales figures are a little slow in starting. A few production hiccups and a few lost contracts later, the cash comes a problem and the investor is replaced by a businessman to strip assets and stop the bleeding.

Although the sorry formula could be applied to any number of failed technical stocks, Tadpole Technology stands out because its losses have not been funded by fund managers' bonuses but from the nesteggs of thousands of private investors. When it floated at 65p a share five years ago, it had a roaring welcome from the market and the industry as its product — a revolutionary laptop computer — was acclaimed the fastest and most developed in the world.

If such devices were the way ahead, then Tadpole's technology was the stock to buy. More than 3,000 investors piled in and have now lost £97.1 million between them. Tadpole failed to metamorphose into a frog-prince. For while it can make clever computers, it has failed to demonstrate it can make enough at the right price and sell them at a profit.

Undoing was the move by George Gray, founder and chief executive, to bring to

market the P1000 laptop. However, the device did not produce a penny in return on £5 million of investment. Next came the ALPHA notebook, but it was forced out of the market. Soon, Tadpole was heading ever more sharply downwards.

Mr Gray was replaced last summer by Bernard Hulme, former manager of Santa Cruz Operation, the Unix software giant. He dumped the P1000 and spent the money reviving the dull but profitable computer boards business.

But six months on, investors are still awaiting results. The company still burns up £4.3 million in overheads in the last six months, against £3.4 million in the whole of the previous financial year. Shareholders have been told the company is now in a cash crisis: either raise £2.5 million through a rights issue, which dilutes an already crippled investment, or the company goes into liquidation.

Albert E. Sharp, which has placed the new 10p shares with institutions, says Tadpole is now the definitive speculative punt. It placed hope in Tadpole's brand name — dirt in the City but still respected in some technology circles.

Mr Hulme is billing the company as new Tadpole with a fair prospect of revival. With a market value of £6.3 million, there seems little prospect of a takeover approach. Its main bait was the technology division, but that is being stripped to make ends meet, taking the former wonder stock more or less back where it started.

Copper-plated

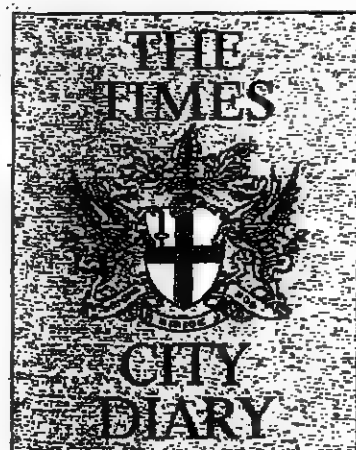
I HAVE some good news and I have some bad news for those nice chaps Charlie "Copperfingers" Vincent and Ashley Levett, now enjoying a quiet if luxurious life in Monte Carlo. They, and their Winchester group of companies, have been tarred for years by the unwarranted attentions, they say, of investigators looking into the \$1.8 billion Summitone Corporation copper scandal and trying to decide who, if anyone, was to blame. Now Alan King, chief investigator at

the Securities and Futures Authority and head of the civil copper probe, has hung up his magnifying glass and dusting powder. Thus the good news. The bad news is that as of today he has returned to work for another watchdog, the Securities and Investments Board — as a lead adviser on the copper case.

● THANKS to Barclays Bank and Celine, that braying twit next to you on the train this morning who has already phoned his office three times to demonstrate how indispensable he is can be even more irritating in future. He will soon be able to call up his bank and credit card statements on a special screen and leave them lying around in easy view, so demonstrating how much he earns and how fast he can spend it. It's called progress, I believe.

Property play

IF YOU bump into a captain of industry, looking a little more fragile than usual this morning, then he or she was probably at Claridge's last night to celebrate the retirement of Peter Winfield at the age of 70 after the best part of 46 years with Hecley & Baker. The guest list reads like *Who's Who in Retail and Property*,



names like Ronson, Ritblat, Mobbs and MacLaurin jumping off the page. Winfield started off in property sticking down stamps and making the tea at a South Kensington estate agents and rose to be senior partner. He will now go off to favour his second "career", as breeder of racehorses.

Star-struck

THE stars left the Baffa ceremony on Tuesday night with a generous bag of goodies, courtesy of the event's sponsors, our friends at Citibank. Among the luxuries such as colognes, cigars, Jaeger discount vouchers and jelly beans (jelly beans?) was a copy of something called *Focus on the City*.

man Islands, spelling out the virtues of this tiny tax haven far, far away from any Gordon Brown tax grab. Curious, because the luvvies' sympathies were with the left, with award presenters such as Eddie Izzard, the cross-dressing comedian, and Julie Christie openly looking forward to a Labour government.

Brass neck

STRONG men know not to tangle with the Stock Exchange, whose weapons strike fear into the hearts of wrong-doers everywhere. Why, yesterday a particularly randy can of worms called Greenhills, a restaurants company that in time-honoured fashion took the punters' money, ignored them completely thereafter and then went bust, got its comeuppance. The Stock Exchange censured it. But what is this? The Exchange has not censured any of the company's directors and its censure of the company should not be taken as implying criticism of any director's conduct — the official notice reads. What on earth is the point of failing to criticise the human beings running the company, and reserving your censure for an inanimate object? "You've been a naughty, naughty brass plate. Don't do it again."

Alles in ordnung

WITH brutal Teutonic thoroughness, the powers that be at Deutsche

Morgan Grenfell have picked through a list of 80,000 investors who lost money in the Peter Young affair and compensated them all.

This week the cheques should finally arrive. The biggest is to an unnamed institution, for £4 million. But the German masters — colloquially known to their British underlings at Morgan Grenfell here for some reason as "tickets", or "ticket touts", I understand — were determined all would be paid off in full. *Alles, verstehen Sie? Alles!* So three cheques went out to three investors — for a penny apiece.

MARTIN WALLER



The Peter Young affair has led to compensation payments

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Things are so busy no one's going to have the time to vote

Punt at five-year low to sterling

FROM EILEEN MCCABE
IN DUBLIN

THE Irish pound fell yesterday to its lowest level against sterling in more than five years after the Central Bank stopped supporting it in the currency market.

After spending up to Ir£300 million over the past two weeks trying to shore up the value of the pound against sterling, the bank apparently changed tack yesterday and withdrew from the market. After slipping from Ir£4.25p to Ir£4.15p against sterling in early morning trade, the Irish currency steadied to finish the day at Ir£4.25p. The Irish currency also fell back to DM12.58 from Tuesday's close of DM12.64.

The latest volatility in the markets can be traced back to remarks by Ruairi Quinn, the Irish Finance Minister. Several weeks ago he said that he would like to see the Irish currency decline from its very high levels within the ERM grid. Currency dealers pounced on the comments and began selling off the Irish currency.

The problem for the Central Bank is that it wants the Irish pound to strengthen against sterling in order to choke off any inflationary threat from higher priced imports from Britain. But it is also anxious that the Irish pound should weaken against other European currencies in the run up to EMU so that it can be locked into the euro at a competitive rate.

Unfortunately for the bank it has so far been unable to engineer such movements mostly because currency dealers continued to treat the Irish pound as a sterling clone.

The whole issue of exchange rates, particularly against sterling, again brings into sharp focus the problems that the Irish Republic may face if it joins EMU and its biggest trading partner, Britain, stays out.



No impact on business from exchange-rate variations for Anton Elsborg, left, the finance director, and Chris Cook

Ellison waiting game as Apple bid is put on hold

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

LARRY ELLISON, the flamboyant software billionaire and founder of Oracle Corp, has suspended plans to bid for Apple Computer, the all-time computer manufacturer.

Mr Ellison said that he may still buy Apple shares as an investment, and may decide to launch a full bid in the future, but was shelving his proposed bid for the time being.

Some analysts speculated that he anticipates a further slide in the company's shares later this year if its recovery plan fails to turn Apple around. Sources close to Mr Ellison said that a factor in his decision was the concern of major Oracle shareholders that the purchase of Apple would distract him from managing his own company.

Last month Mr Ellison approached several leading institutional shareholders in Apple about mounting a joint bid for the company, which is suffering from steeply falling sales and profits. Mr Ellison would have used part of his

own personal fortune of around \$6 billion to mount the offer which, at Apple's current share price, would have been worth around \$2.1 billion.

The bid plans embarrassed Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, who is now an advisor to Gil Amelio, the chief executive. Mr Ellison said that he was discussing the idea with Mr Jobs. A close friend of Mr Ellison, Mr Jobs insisted that he had no part in the scheme to oust Mr Amelio and the rest of Apple's management.

Mr Ellison believes that

Apple should pull out of selling personal computers and concentrate instead on making low-cost networking computers linked to the Internet. Such a move would mesh well with Oracle's business of creating networking software.

His decision to drop the bid may come as a blow to Prince al-Waleed bin Talal, the Saudi Arabian investor, who bought a 5 per cent stake in Apple in March, making him the largest shareholder. With no prospect of a buyer for Apple, the

shares are likely to fall further unless there is a spectacular turnaround in the company's fortunes.

In the second quarter of its financial year Apple reported a \$708 million loss as worldwide sales plunged by 33 per cent. A survey by Dataquest, a computer consultancy firm, showed that the company was no longer in the top five personal computer sellers.

Apple has retained Goldman Sachs, the investment bank, to help it to fight off prospective bids.

Amerada quashes Premier speculation

AMERADA HESS, the US oil company, has no plans to alter its shareholding in Premier Oil (Carl Morinshew writes). Sam Laidlaw, chairman of Amerada's UK subsidiary, quashed speculation that the company was planning a bid or a sale of its 25 per cent interest and said Amerada

was happy with its investment. He said: "Just because the standstill agreement has come to an end is no reason to announce a change. We don't have anything planned."

Mr Laidlaw yesterday survived a challenge, at the Premier annual meeting, to his position as a non-executive

director on the board of Premier, from Roland Shaw, the company's former chief executive. Mr Shaw questioned the impartiality of Mr Laidlaw and his ability to represent shareholders properly. "What happens if a third party makes a bid?" he asked. "When a matter of substance arises,

who represents the other 75 per cent of shareholders?"

Barrie Stephens, Premier chairman, said: "We have never had the slightest conflict of interest between Premier Oil and Amerada Hess." There were 278 million votes in favour of Mr Laidlaw's re-election with 10 million opposed.

Currency boost for David Brown

BY OLIVER AUGUST

DAVID BROWN GROUP bucked the recent trend of UK exporters hit by the rise of sterling. The group saw no impact on its global engineering business from exchange-rate variations last year.

Chris Cook, chairman, said: "The City expected to see a significant currency loss. But the impact of the rising pound has been neutral."

He conceded that some sales may have been lost as sterling prices rose, but said the group was favourably affected by the exchange-rate movement of the Australian dollar. In 1997 so far, currency losses amount to £400,000 but first-quarter orders are up 27 per cent on last year.

Mr Cook said: "Our margins are improving continuously. We are successfully putting significant resources into making the business more efficient."

In the year to January 31, pre-tax profits rose to £172 million, from £141 million. Earnings per share rose to 17.7p, from 15.3p, and the full-year dividend was 8.4p, from 7.6p, with a 5.7p final.

The strongest area of growth was the geared motor business. Demand for gearboxes in light industrial applications has been soaring.

Mr Cook said: "In terms of strategy, we are aiming for more of the same. We are working on new plant developments, making our businesses even more global. In the past we have grown through acquisitions. While this will continue, there are no immediate targets." The international proportion of the group's business has grown from 40 per cent to 60 per cent. David Brown shares rose 10 1/2 p to 200 1/2 p yesterday.

More jobs to go at Kvaerner Energy

A SECOND round of redundancies has hit Kvaerner Energy in Scotland. Up to 137 jobs are to go at the company's thermal power division at Clydebank. The cutbacks, announced yesterday, follow the 140 redundancies announced in November and will reduce the workforce to about 700. Chris Packard, president of Kvaerner Energy, said: "Continuing intense competition in the marketplace and a lack of new orders has forced the company to make this decision." He said it was hoped the number of compulsory redundancies might be reduced by transferring some staff to the energy division's sister company in Oslo.

The threat of further job losses was raised in February when Kvaerner Energy said it needed to achieve £32 million annual cost savings. The parent company, which owns Trafalgar House, suffered a fall in pre-tax profits in 1996 to £69.4 million (£22.5 million). A restructuring of Kvaerner's hydro power and thermal power business in Norway is also under way.

Ex-Lands in talks

EX-LANDS, the property company, is in talks over a possible acquisition, which may lead to new appointments to the board. The statement was made in response to a strong rise in shares. The company denied, however, that it was in takeover talks that may lead to a bid, saying: "Contrary to press speculation the board is not engaged in talks involving a takeover of the company." Ex-Lands added: "Any shares that may be issued as consideration for these acquisitions will be issued at less than the current share price." The shares fell 1p to 20 1/2 p, after a run from 7 1/2 p last September.

Life Numbers loss

LIFE NUMBERS, the largest of Britain's personalised phone number companies, said yesterday that it expects to break even this month after reporting "disappointing" results in the half year to December 31. The company has cut costs to increase margins: overhead expenses, as a result, have declined by 50 per cent. Life Numbers, which floated on the Alternative Investment Market last July, reported a pre-tax loss of £351,000, or 7p a share, on sales of £285,000. It attributed the loss partly to increased competition. The shares closed unchanged at 9p.

Dolphin acquisition

DOLPHIN PACKAGING has acquired Food Containers, a manufacturer of plastic food trays and punnets based in Leeds, for £2.25 million. In the year to June 30, 1996, Food Containers, a privately owned company, earned a pre-tax profit of £321,473 on turnover of £2.63 million. Net assets were £674,000 at the financial year-end. Dolphin, which said the acquisition will immediately enhance earnings, will fund the purchase from existing facilities. The company said that it expects to end the 1997 financial year with net cash.

Fitzwilton buys stake

FITZWILTON, the Irish industrial holding group, has exercised an option to buy Morgan Stanley's remaining stake in Shuttlesworth for Ir£23 million. Fitzwilton said that it has sold Waterford Wedgwood that this gives it a further holding of 26.5 million Waterford Wedgwood shares. This brings Fitzwilton's total shareholding in the crystal and fine china group to Ir£19.66 million or 16.4 per cent of the equity in the group. Through Shuttlesworth's holding, it now has voting control of more than 19.94 per cent of Waterford.

Raw deal from 'one-stop shops'

Clive Parritt on why he believes joint practices do not serve the professionals or the public interest

MULTI-disciplinary partnerships between accountants and lawyers are growing in number. In some cases the legal and accounting arms of the same firm trade as separate partnerships but the combination is no less real for that. The separation is as artificial as that between auditors and tax advisers in the European Union.

I do not believe that these joint partnerships are beneficial to the public or even to the clients of such firms. There may be some benefit to the professionals themselves, but even this is not free from doubt. On the other hand, I cannot support legal prevention of multi-disciplinary partnerships between lawyers and accountants as has been suggested by some EU commentators — I hope that commercial logic will prevail.

The arguments for combinations seem to be based on the principle that "one-stop shopping" will be good for clients and will improve the profits of the professionals involved. It might be tempting to believe that one-stop shopping could be attractive to clients of legal or accounting firms, but is it really? What does a client seek?

Unless the client believes in Father Christmas, surely he cannot expect a group of professionals who have banded

together for profit to offer lower prices.

A client using a one-stop shop will certainly get his advice from one place. But it is not the location of advice that is important to him, but its quality, its relevance and the manner of delivery. The client should always seek the most appropriate advice for the purpose. Would you expect advice on complex tax schemes, High Court litigation, pensions advice, licensing rules, personal tax returns, small shop conveyancing and auditing all to be bought from the same firm, regardless of size or location?

Only occasionally is it likely that the best legal advice for a client problem will be available from the legal arm of an accounting firm or, alternatively, that the best accounting advice will be available from the accounting arm of a legal firm. Worse still, will professionals really be independent and advise clients to go elsewhere when appropriate?

If there is little in it for clients, what about the professionals themselves? Professional practice has always been a collegiate activity in which people with similar skills and ideas work together and share experiences in order to build the combined knowledge base of the practice. While there are some similarities between accountants and



Can law firms count on success with joint partnerships?

lawyers, the main technical skills of the professions are different, their approach is different and in many areas the type of advice is different. The profit motive alone cannot overcome these differences, even if the extra profit sought is achieved.

While I refer work to lawyers frequently, I have only two selection criteria. First, is it the firm with the right

expertise for the job? Secondly, does its culture (style) match that of the client? Of course I also take note of referrals to my firm, but only after ensuring that the primary selection criteria are achieved.

There is a huge cross-flow of work between accountants and lawyers and I suggest it is for this reason that accounting firms particularly (as the more predatory of the two groups)

have sought to achieve combinations with firms of lawyers. Clearly they believe they can make more money by persuading the clients of both firms to use just their services. But is this beneficial to clients and will professionals ever again work together so comfortably?

Is it realistic to suppose that, unless the multi-disciplinary partnership has the only expert in a particular field, any competing professional firm will take its clients to a firm where there is a possibility of the client being "poached" by another department of that practice? It is a very brave firm that decides to enter into a business that competes with its clients so visibly.

For many years Baker Tilly has provided specialist advice to the professional practices sector — including legal firms. Quite apart from the cross-referrals, such as litigation support and insolvency, we have prided ourselves on our ability to provide management, business and taxation advice to professional practices.

To maintain this sort of practice it would be unthinkable for a firm such as ours to seek a merger or an association with a firm of solicitors. This is not a public-spirited decision but one made in the interests of our business. I find it surprising that other firms have abandoned this profitable and rapidly growing business so readily.

Joint practices between lawyers and accountants will not, I suggest, serve either the professionals or the public interest.

Clive Parritt is chairman of Baker Tilly.

Get the measure of environmental issues

WHEN the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) first sponsored awards for environmental reporting it held the event in the Natural History Museum, and the awards were presented amid stuffed lions by the equally lionine and bearded botanist David Bellamy.

This year, the awards' sixth, they were presented by Sir Anthony Cleaver, chairman of AEA Technology. The contrast is extraordinary, and it tells its own story. What was seen, even a mere six years ago, as an outcrop of the fashion for the Green Party, recycling and endangered species, has now become something much more serious and business-like. And it has also, for the accountants, become a measurable activity.

Green sentiments have grown up. What was once a matter of simple concern has turned into hard fact and responsibilities. Look at the last set of accounts from any of the major companies and you will find environmental concerns set out not just as

to be a high level of demand for an acceptable set of "environmental benchmarking techniques," it said, "but as yet that demand does not appear to have translated into action."

Roger Adams, head of technical services at the ACCA, also sees another problem. For those people "within companies, greater disclosure is often greeted with the old knee-jerk reaction of complaining about information overload. And the published accounts of listed companies have grown enormously in recent years. This is partly a simple reaction to the greater criticism of 'business by shareholders and the public alike. And partly it is because of the move towards wider responsibilities which 'companies are assumed to own."

So there is trepidation at more pages of dense figures and explanation, and there is worry that, like all those pages of information on directors' remuneration, this will become another part of the accounts which promises elucidation but delivers

smokescreens. "People," said Adams, "are unhappy about overloading the conventional framework, and 'corporate governance overload' is always invoked whenever you talk of environmental disclosure."

You can understand the point. British Airways, which won the main award this year, produces a separate environmental report which is already the size of an average full report and accounts. But it fulfils a need, and the need is not simply that of the user: it supplies a need for the company.

This week has seen a skirmish between the Association of British Insurers and Firc, the corporate environmental resolution at the Kyrlecon environmental meeting. Companies need to have shown clear commitment to what are now seen as their wider responsibilities.

One former president of the ACCA, David Bishop, is now head of infrastructure and government consulting at KPMG. He is clear that this is now the accountants' "bread and butter." "Accountants are able to give a clear and transparent view," he said. But environmental issues, measurable or not, are political issues, and accountants are not always good at those. Bishop is clear that accountants have broken through into the market of assessing all measures of performance which have financial consequences. "We've gone upstream," is how he puts it. But when it comes to the political consequences, accountants need to "ensure that they are not upstream without a paddle."



ROBERT BRUCE

Dame Sheila sends regrets

THE great Dame Sheila Masters is rumoured to be digging her heels in over her presidential programme when she becomes the first female president of the English ICA in a couple of years' time. Normally presidents attend all of the district society dinners around the country. But Masters has decreed that some of these are too far-flung for her. It is believed

that she has limited her non-London engagements to one a month. Given her reputation for plain-speaking, many accountants north of Watford and west of Swindon are breathing a sigh of relief.

Call to duty

THE firm of Baker Tilly, always a rich source of tales of daft doings in the bureaucratic

depths of government, runs regular snippets under the title of "red tape" in their newsletter. In the latest they have gone Eurosceptic.

Relating the sorry story of how Brussels has decided that duty-free drink allowances for service personnel should be limited only to Nato forces, they reveal that visiting Commonwealth forces are having to repay \$1 million in back

duty. "Ironically," says Baker Tilly, "these troops from the Commonwealth only came to Britain in the Forties to help free Europe from tyranny." That's telling them.

That awkward age

ACCOUNTANCY AGE, the much-loved professional weekly, is going through turbulent times again. This week

Andrew Pring, editor, has left abruptly. No one is saying much about why. "Irreconcilable difficulties" is the phrase being quoted on both sides. Observers wonder whether the policy of trying to charm, rather than savage, the Big Six accountancy firms was wearing a bit thin.

Certainly the decision to install Peter "I eat Stoy Hayward partners for breakfast" Williams, a former editor, as acting editor suggests so.

ROBERT BRUCE

ANY OTHER BUSINESS



Spider-Man

Battle for survival of America's superheroes

Investors plot mutiny at Marvel with an alternative rescue to a management plan to save the group from bankruptcy

WAR rages for mastery of Spider-Man, The Incredible Hulk, Captain America, the Fantastic Four and Mighty Thor. Marvel Entertainment Group, America's leading comic book publisher, is being fought over by rival factions who wish to lead it out of a bankruptcy court.

The company's management, installed by Ronald Perleman, the controlling shareholder and financier, announced its reorganisation plan on Monday. It calls for Marvel to merge with Toy Biz, which makes toys based on Marvel characters, and give its Fleer/SkyBox trading card unit and Panini children's sticker company to its bank lenders for sale. Bondholders, led by Carl Icahn, and stockholders get only the right to buy up to 12.5 per cent of the new Marvel.

On Tuesday, the Icahn camp fired back. The group submitted its own plan, in which the banks would still get the trading card and sticker units but bondholders would take control of Marvel. They would back a \$365 million stock sale to finance the company.

David Rosner, solicitor for the bondholders' committee, said: "The bondholders' reorganisation plan represents the best opportunity to bring Marvel out of bankruptcy and to return the company to profitability."

Icahn won a bankruptcy court victory that gave bondholders the right to seize 79 per cent of Marvel's stock. Mr Perleman, who owns those shares, then withdrew his own reorganisation plan, which also included a merger with Toy Biz.

Marvel Entertainment Group's own plan, which has not yet been filed in a bankruptcy court, was criticised by the bondholders as providing a "windfall at the expense of shareholders" for Toy Biz and the banks, which would also get \$420 million and stock in the combined Marvel/Toy Biz.

Marvel said that it could make no comment yet about the bondholders' plan, submitted to the court on Tuesday. The bondholders' plan would need the approval of US Bankruptcy Court Judge Helen Balick in Wilmington, Delaware. Bondholders would initially get 79 per cent of Marvel stock, the same amount as is backed by their bonds, and other shareholders would own the rest. Fleer/SkyBox and Panini, which the bondholders value at \$385 million, would go to the banks. The bondholders would issue a ten-year promissory note to pay the rest of the bank debt.

Marvel, the largest producer of trading cards in the US, got into financial trouble when collectors, who bought cards and comics with abandon in the late 1980s and early 1990s, lost their appetite for superheroes.



Icahn: rival plan

Grampian plans to expand mills shops

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

GRAMPIAN HOLDINGS, the Scottish mini-conglomerate, is planning to open at least 20 more Edinburgh Woollen Mills shops south of the border this year, and is looking to open up to 100 more branches over the next five years.

Grampian took full control of the 227-store EWM, in which it already held a 25 per cent stake, last September, paying £64.4 million. The deal caused controversy at the time as it took investors, who had expected Grampian to abandon retailing, completely by surprise.

Bill Hughes, chairman, said that results released yesterday

showed that the acquisition had been fully justified.

Pre-tax profit in the 13 months to January 31 was £13.7 million, compared with £10.5 million in the previous 12 months. The figures are hard to compare because the end of the company's financial year has been changed.

Only 25 per cent of EWM profits are included for the period to September, and 100 per cent is included for the remainder of the year. As well as the openings, about 30 refits are planned for this year.

Earnings were £11.5p, compared with 10.24p, and the final dividend of 4.65p, compared with 4.22p, payable on August 4, gives a total for the year of 6.50p against 5.99p.

Mr Hughes pointed out that gearing, which had been forecast to rise to 100 per cent at the year end after the retail acquisition, had in fact come in at 86 per cent.

He said that strong trading in the third quarter had continued for the rest of the year: EWM's performance "has exceeded our expectations," he said. Like-for-like sales were up 12 per cent.

Turnover at pharmaceuticals was £56.9 million, an increase of 14 per cent over the previous year. In the UK and Ireland, sales were 16.2 per cent ahead at £40.5 million, while profits increased 11.8 per cent to £4.73 million. In spite of adverse exchange rates, overseas subsidiaries' turnover grew 8.9 per cent to £16.64 million. The main drivers were successful tender awards in the Middle East and substantial sales of its treatment for sea lice on farmed salmon.

At the transport division, turnover was 11.9 per cent higher at £48.6 million. The warehousing and distribution business continued to expand throughout 1996 and a further 300,000 sq ft of warehouse space will be added this year. Landfill operations were hit by the implementation of the landfill tax in October, while the plant hire division had to cope with a depressed construction sector.

After the acquisition of the Scottish Woollens Group, which came along with EWM, the company has formed a branded leisure goods division, which also includes Filodory knitwear. The division turned in a loss of £496,000 for the 13 months, compared with a profit of £475,000 for the previous 12 months. The company is now looking at possible synergies.

Tempus, page 20



EDMUND GARTSIDE, chairman and managing director of Shiloh, the textile spinners, healthcare and protective clothing company, yesterday reported a rise in pre-tax profits to £14 million from £841,284 for the year to

March 29. Earnings per share were 16.14p (11.64p). There is a final dividend of 3p (2.85p), making a total of 4p (3.85p). The shares rose 11p to 142½p.

Turnover rose to £35.4 million from £28.1 million. The company benefited

from a strong performance by the healthcare business and a maiden contribution from the two spinning units acquired from Courtaulds Textiles.

Shiloh, based in Oldham, Lancashire, said the strength of sterling had adversely affected sales in some areas of the business. The company seeks to overcome this impact through the development of higher-added-value yarns for specialised markets.

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Halifax launches free share service

By ANNE ASHWORTH

THE Halifax has told customers that they will not be disadvantaged if they use its free dealing system to sell their shares. The society, which floats on the stock market next month, is anxious to warn customers that requesting share certificates and dealing through other brokers carries a risk.

Those opting for share certificates are hoping to get a higher price for their holdings in the first week of trading.

Alliance & Leicester shareholders, who last week disposed of their shares through firms of stockbrokers, received as much as £700 more than those who used the former society's dealing service. However, if millions of Halifax savers and borrowers chose the share certificate route, then Crest, the already overburdened new share settle-

ment system, could be overwhelmed.

The Halifax's postal share dealing service will be free for the first ten days of trading, beginning on June 2. Only those who wish to add to their holdings will be able to deal by telephone.

John Miller, Halifax housing and technology director, said yesterday that the postal service would ensure a "rapid response".

He continued: "We looked at the possibility of telephone share dealing, but with 7.6 million shareholders, this would have been impracticable. We also looked at issuing all members with certificates, but we were concerned that, if large numbers tried to sell, the market may have been unable to cope with getting these certificates into the system in time for settlement."

Cadbury shares take a dip

SHARES in Cadbury Schweppes, the soft drinks and confectionery company, slumped 10p to 513½p yesterday after it reported that its US soft drink sales had risen just 1 per cent in the first quarter of this year (Alasdair Murray writes).

The market was disappointed with the figures, which were well below the 6 per cent rise in case sales announced on Tuesday by PepsiCo, one of Cadbury's main rivals. The American soft drinks market as a whole is estimated to have grown about 5 per cent in the first quarter.

Cadbury said sales of its Dr Pepper brand jumped 5 per cent, while volume sales of 7Up and other brands dropped 2 per cent. Cadbury's US drinks sales account for about 60 per cent of its total beverage turnover.

Further interest in colliery sale

By OUR INDUSTRIAL STAFF

A SECOND potential buyer has emerged for the flooded Monktonhall Colliery near Edinburgh, which went into liquidation with the loss of 300 jobs last week after Waverley Mining, the mining finance house, decided the project was no longer viable.

The Coal Authority set a deadline of close of business today for formal expressions of interest in the mine in Central Scotland.

It advertised the pit in last Friday's *Financial Times*, giving potential buyers seven days to express an interest.

The Midlothian pit is currently being operated on a care and maintenance basis until its future is settled by the liquidator.

John Laurie, the liquidator, of Coopers & Lybrand, said there were now two interested parties in the frame. He

said: "I cannot disclose information about either party who have lodged interest with me. I have put them in touch with the Coal Authority, who are trying to sell Monktonhall."

John Delaney of the Coal Authority said nothing could be divulged until after the closing date.

He added: "Any interested parties would be given a further period of time to develop their business plan and put their proposals together."

Waverley Mining had originally decided to press ahead with Monktonhall, believing that problems with dampness could be resolved. Last week, however, it decided that the problems with flooding were too big to contain. Union leaders, on the other hand, believed that the pit could become viable.

Soco International to float

By CARL MORTISHED

SOCO INTERNATIONAL, an oil company with interests in Russia, Mongolia, Yemen, Tunisia and the UK, is planning to raise \$75 million in a flotation on the London Stock Exchange which could value the company at \$250 million.

The company is a collection of assets made up from the

international interests of Snyder Oil, an American company, and the non-core assets of Cairn Energy, which have been sold for \$40 million plus shares, amounting to 10 per cent of Soco. Cairn is selling its onshore interests in the UK and certain assets in Mongolia, Tunisia and Yemen amounting to 28.6 million barrels of oil equivalent.

BG warning over competition

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BG, the demerged pipeline and international division of British Gas, said the Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry into pricing could jeopardise the future of competition for household supply.

David Varney, BG chief executive, said: "It is essential

for this MMC inquiry to provide Transco with long-term regulatory clarity and stability, which is vital for the successful implementation of full domestic competition by the end of 1998."

BG and the regulator have fought a bitter battle over pricing proposals for Transco — the pipeline network — and their dispute was referred to

the MMC. Its findings are due to be finalised this month.

Mr Varney told BG's annual meeting that Transco could not set in place the framework for competition unless it had sufficient resources, a clear warning that a tough MMC decision would jeopardise extension of the market from the 2½ million homes that shop around for a gas supplier.

Chemicals shake-up at Bayer

By OUR BUSINESS STAFF

MANFRED SCHNEIDER, chairman of Bayer, the German group, said that some chemicals businesses may be sold off or shut down.

Herr Schneider told the group's shareholders' meeting: "The developments in the chemicals division in the first quarter were disappointing, and despite higher sales, operating earnings were lower and some divisions even posted a loss."

"Structural problems are the cause of this, mostly due to technological deficits, changed market conditions and the cost disadvantages in Germany."

To overcome these problems, a bundle of measures will be necessary, he added, including optimising production processes, cost-cutting and hiring off or disposing of



Manfred Schneider said some businesses will have to close

activities. Herr Schneider said: "We will not be able to avoid shutting down uneconomical businesses which cannot be restructured satisfactorily."

Bayer will look at various options, including partner-

1997 group sales of more than DM50 billion.

The forecast was more downbeat than last month, when the group said that it had a realistic chance of topping 1996 profits this year, and profits and sales for this year were at the lower end of expectations.

Bayer's first-quarter 1997 pre-tax profits rose 5 per cent to DM1.218 billion on turnover of DM13.172 billion, up from DM12.176 billion. Sales in 1996 totalled DM48.6 billion.

Analysts were disappointed with the performance and the shares fell after the figures were announced. Initially, the stock was down 1.14 per cent, or 80 pfennigs, at DM69.40. One analyst said the figures "were a big disappointment", adding that sales should have risen further, given the group's improved economic conditions.

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TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

[illegible]

Exception must be treated with caution

Canon Kabushiki Kaisha v Green Cartridge Co (Hong Kong) Ltd

Before Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Lloyd of Berwick, Lord Hoffmann, Lord Hope of Craighead and Lord Hutton (Judgment April 30)

The spare parts exception provided by the House of Lords in *British Leyland Motor Corporation Ltd v Armstrong Patents Co Ltd* [1986] AC 570 should be treated with some caution.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in *British Leyland Motor Corporation Ltd v Armstrong Patents Co Ltd* [1986] AC 570 had allowed an appeal by a majority on the copyright issue but had dismissed an appeal by a majority on the patent issue.

Mr David Kitchen, QC and Mr Paul Sheeh, QC for the plaintiff, Mr Simon Thorley, QC and Mr Stewart Wong, QC for the defendant.

LORD HOFFMANN said that the question was whether the spare parts doctrine recognised in the *British Leyland* case entitled the defendant to infringe the plaintiff's copyright in drawings of parts of the car.

During the lifetime of the plaintiff's machines various of the components would need to be replaced and the supply of toner renewed. The plaintiff decided to include a supply of toner and these parts in a single disposable plastic cartridge to be inserted by the owner of the machine when the toner gave out.

The aftermarket, as it was called, in cartridges contributed significantly to the plaintiff's profits. In 1990 the initial cost of one of its typical laser printers was \$1,700, and during a projected life of five years or 200,000 copies the owner would need about 62 cartridges at \$1.20 each, involving a further expenditure of \$7,500.

Although the aftermarket was dominated by the plaintiff's sales of new cartridges, there was also in Hong Kong a cottage industry of refilling used cartridges comprising 40 per cent of the market there.

The defendant manufactured new cartridges and sold them in Hong Kong and for export in competition with those of the plaintiff. The plaintiff commenced proceedings, inter alia, for infringement of copyright in the drawings from which 48 of the parts for the cartridge had been made.

It was conceded that the plaintiff was entitled to artistic copyright in those drawings. Accordingly, by sections 1(1) and 3(5)(a) of the Copyright Act 1956, extended to Hong Kong by the Copyright (Amendment) Ordinance 1992, the plaintiff had the exclusive right to reproduce the drawings in any material form.

The spare parts exception was discussed in *British Leyland* in the speeches of Lord Bridge of Harwich and Lord Templeman. Their reasoning was not entirely congruent.

LORD BRIDGE said (at p625) that the owner of a car "must be entitled to do whatever is necessary to keep it in running order and to effect whatever repairs may be necessary in the most economical way possible." That was a right "inherent in the ownership of the car itself".

In the case of an exhaust pipe, he could exercise that right by producing a copy himself or instructing someone else to do so. But the right to repair could be of value only if other people could manufacture copy exhausts which the motorist could acquire in an unrestricted market.

Thus there was a clear conflict of legal rights: the owner's right of repair and the manufacturer's copyright. The question was which right should prevail over the other. In Lord Bridge's view, it was the right of the owner.

LORD TEMPLEMAN (at p628-645) had approached the question differently. He found an analogy in the principle that a grantor might not derogate from his grant. The manufacturer, having sold the car, should not be entitled to derogate from his grant by using his copyright to prevent the owner from buying a spare exhaust in the open market. The principle of non-derogation was based upon the presumed intention of the parties.

But Lord Templeman (at p643) regarded the right to repair as inalienable. "Every owner of a car has the right to repair it. That right would be useless if suppliers of spare parts were not entitled to anticipate the need for repair. The right cannot, in my view, be withheld by the manufacturer of the car by contract with the first purchaser and cannot be withheld from any subsequent owner." That was quite different from non-derogation from grant as understood in the law of property.

The *British Leyland* spare parts exception could not be regarded as truly founded upon any principle of the law of contract or property. It was instead an expression of what the House perceived as overriding public policy, namely the need to prevent a manufacturer from using copyright, as opposed to patents or design right, in order to control the aftermarket in spare parts.

It was a strong thing, not to say constitutionally questionable, for a judicially declared head of public policy to be treated as overriding or qualifying an express statutory right.

The question whether it was contrary to the public interest for a manufacturer to be able to exercise monopoly control over his aftermarket could not usually be

answered without some inquiry into the relevant market. It was not necessary for the purposes of the appeal to form any view on whether the existence of copyright was capable of giving the plaintiff such economic power in the aftermarket as to be anti-competitive and contrary to the public interest. The question was a complicated one which could not be solved by broad generalisation.

The basis of the decision in *British Leyland* appeared to rest upon two features.

First, a compelling analogy with the kind of repair which the ordinary man who bought an article would unquestionably assume that he could do for himself, or commission someone else to do, without infringing any rights of the manufacturer.

Second, an assumption that the exercise of monopoly power in the aftermarket by means of copyright would unquestionably operate against the interests of consumers.

Once one departed from the case in which the unfairness to the customer and the anti-competitive nature of the monopoly was plain and obvious as it appeared to be in *British Leyland*, the jurisprudential and economic basis for the doctrine became extremely fragile.

In the present case the analogy with repair was far weaker. The cartridge would usually be replaced at a stage when nothing whatever in the photocopyer required repair. It would simply have run out of toner.

There could be said to be an element of preventive maintenance: certain items were replaced because there was a distinct possibility they might give out at some time in the near future. But those items formed only a relatively small part of the unit which was being replaced.

Mr Thorley said that in *British Leyland* it was assumed that the exception permitted the manufacture of entire exhaust assemblies, even though parts might still be

circumstances. Including the decision in *R v Saunders*, evidence was obtained, the admission of the evidence would have such an adverse effect on the fairness of the proceedings that the court ought not to admit it.

Mr Stephen Batten, QC and Mr Alexander Cameron, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for the defendant, Mr David Gibson-Lee, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for the plaintiff, Mr Peter Clark, QC and Mr James Eadie for the Crown.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE, giving the judgment of the court, reviewed the facts and said that the appellants' argument was that, despite the language of section 17(1)(b), the court should, in view of section 78(1) and *Saunders v United Kingdom* (The Times December 18, 1996; 1997 23 EHRR 313) allowing an appeal by Ernest

which gave power to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to appoint inspectors to carry out investigations and require persons to produce documents, attend and give oral evidence in connection with an investigation.

Section 177 of the 1986 Act provides: "(3) ... it shall be the duty of that person to comply with that requirement."

"(4) A statement made by a person in compliance with a requirement imposed by virtue of this section may be used in evidence against him."

Section 78 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 provides: "(1) In any proceedings the court may refuse to allow evidence on which the prosecution proposes to rely to be given if it appears to the court that, having regard to all the

circumstances, including the manner in which the evidence was obtained, the admission of the evidence would have such an adverse effect on the fairness of the proceedings that the court ought not to admit it."

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Power to make order to establish jurisdiction



FILM 1

Depp and Pacino star in *Donnie Brasco*, a thoughtful Mafia movie by Mike Newell



FILM 2

A lawyer compelled to tell the truth? That's the scenario for Jim Carrey in *Liar Liar*

THE TIMES ARTS



FILM 3

Scream lives up to its name, but Wes Craven's great horror movie has droll humour too



FILM 4

Tilda Swinton is outstanding in *Female Perversions*, a feminist essay daringly executed

Pacino makes an offer you can't refuse

CINEMA: Geoff Brown sees Johnny Depp get lost in the master's shadow in the arresting *Donnie Brasco*

Hollywood loves a winner. When Mike Newell won through with *Four Weddings and a Funeral* he found himself deluged with so many scripts it took him a year to read them. The project that caught his eye, *Donnie Brasco*, was a world removed from broad social comedy and Hugh Grant's floppy hair. Gangsters. New York. The late 1970s. Here we go, you might think: blood and bullets, death and spaghetti, another Scorsese or Coppola rip-off, another British director sucked into the Hollywood machine.

But *Donnie Brasco* bucks the trend. True, Newell was given Al Pacino to direct, but the luminary of *The Godfather* is not in a godfather mood. His Lefty Ruggiero is a smalltime hood getting smaller in the Mafia hierarchy. Glasses, nasty coat with a fur collar: nothing glamorous here. He has killed many times, although some days he is reduced to smashing open parking meters.

Then *Donnie Brasco* (Johnny Depp) heaves into view, a young thief on the make, who becomes his protégé. Ruggiero sees his own future in Brasco, for better or worse: "I die with you, Donnie. If anything happens, I'm responsible."

This is a reflective movie, more concerned with trust and friendship than piling up corpses. And it's a movie with a twist. For Brasco is an FBI undercover agent who worms his way into Ruggiero's confidence to expose the mob family. As his deception advances, Brasco's dilemma, in theory at least, becomes acute: he feels the lure of the criminal life, and balks at the betrayal to come.

Here the film runs into difficulties, for Depp's character is a void. We must guess at his thoughts and his torment: Paul Attanasio's script, adapted from a true story, gives us few hints, and Depp is not the man to elaborate. Besides, Pacino, he appears, shallow, although even more experienced actors would be in difficulties next to this consummate screen performer.

Newell does not forget the death and spaghetti. The most chilling moment comes when all join hands chopping up a body with knives. Livelier scenes occur in Florida, where the mob — Michael Madsen, Bruno Kirby and James Russo among them — decamp to do business. But mostly Newell plays it straight, observing the Mafia rituals, watching out for the cruel ironies of trust and betrayal, of friendship found and lost. This is a distinctive and memorable film.

The last time moviegoers saw Jim Carrey he was a borderline psychotic in *The Cable Guy* who made life hell for Michael J. Fox and a good percentage of the audience. Luckily, the man shows some improvement in *Liar Liar*. Carrey still contorts his face, performs cartwheels with his limbs and yells at the world in

funny voices. But there is a strange new ingredient in his new character: the milk of human kindness.

Fletcher Reede loves his son. He neglects him, too — as a divorced, fast-talking attorney with a roving eye and a gift for lying there are many other demands on his time. So, after he fails to return for his son's fifth birthday party, little Max blows out the candles on his cake and whispers: "I wish, for just one day, Dad couldn't tell a lie."

So it transpires, just as it did in past decades for the hero of that comic perennial *Nothing but the Truth*, originally a novel, then a play, and last filmed with Bob Hope in 1941. Defending an indefensible case in court, Carrey wriggles and writhes trying to lie, but the words will not come. The only sounds emerging from his mouth are hard facts and canny comments. His practice is in peril; he might also lose access to his son (played by television tot Justin Cooper).

The film pushes its luck by encouraging us to weep small tears at that last prospect. But overall *Liar Liar* makes a fair success of rounding out Carrey's screen character, and finding some legitimate reason for his face to go into paroxysms. As he showed in *The Nutty Professor*, director Tom Shadyac has advanced beyond the juvenile antics of Carrey's first vehicle, *Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*. He can handle a plot, and feelings. This does not make him Billy Wilder, but we must be grateful for small mercies.

Scream is the best horror film in ages, with enough scares, jolts and laughs to reduce an audience to jelly. The maestro at the helm is the creator of *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, Wes Craven, last met playing games with the genre in Wes Craven's *New Nightmare*. Now he is more playful than ever. The youth of a suburban town is terrorised by a serial killer obsessed with horror movie trivia. Everyone else is obsessed too. The video store is the town's focal point and, while the mayhem



Johnny Depp as the undercover FBI man turned minor mobster and Al Pacino as his unwitting supergrass in Mike Newell's *Donnie Brasco*

reaches its final stages, *Hal-loween* unfolds in counterpoint over the living room TV. Craven's script does not rest content with in-jokes galore to delight the fans. He also makes hay with society's debate about the effect of horror movies. "Films don't make psychos," the psychos involved tell Neve Campbell's heroine. "They just make psychos more creative."

Without genuine shocks of its own, however, *Scream* would be a shallow lark. Craven delivers these in style, and encourages us to scream alongside his likeable charac-

ters at the killer in the hallow-teen mask who taunts down the phone, haunts the patio and penetrates every door and window. Unusually for a horror film, *Scream* keeps every part of the body busy: the brain is tickled, the heart warmed, and the stomach turns somersaults.

The brain gets even less sleep in *Female Perversions*, a bizarre and very striking feminist film carved by American director Susan Streifeld from a treatise about female behaviour. The eyes work overtime, too, sizing up the parade of costumes, gestures

and props surrounding the central figure: a woman lawyer at the crossroads, cool and successful on the surface, a mass of neuroses underneath, confused by society's gender requirements and her own inner needs.

Not every actress could survive the scrutiny of Streifeld's camera, or be happy with the film's piecemeal structure and academic-cum-feminist tone. Tilda Swinton has no problem. Whatever Streifeld's demands — a lesbian affair, a ruffling encounter with an unstable sister, a fetish for lipstick, an obsession with a

nagging loose thread — Swinton delivers. The performers surrounding Swinton are stimulating too: they include Amy Madigan and Frances Fisher.

There are awkward moments — fantasy scenes with jagged edges, and gobbers of high pretension. But they matter little in a film of such conceptual daring, unpredictable humour and alluring visual texture.

After that challenging feminist critique, *Margaret's Museum* looks peculiarly irrelevant and dull. This is the tale of one feisty woman coping, then cracking, in a Nova Scotia mining community. Used as she is to high tea with Merchant Ivory, it must have been bracing for Helena Bonham Carter to marry a

miner and be called "snot-nosed whore". But there is little to enliven Mort Ransen's film beyond the eyebrow-raising finale and the comic gloom of Bonham Carter's mother (Kate Nelligan), who is always attending funerals. "It's cheaper than bingo," she explains, "and the grub's better."

Finally, *The Boy from Mercury*, a slight but sweet Irish film about an alienated eight-year-old boy who decides that he comes from outer space. Writer-director Martin Duffy skillfully recreates a lonely child's life in the late 1950s: dad recently dead, mum remote, school oppressive. Only *Flash Gordon* serials provide any joy. Duffy's young star James Hickey brings a grave, wide-eyed charm to the show, eclipsing such seasoned actors as Rita Tushingham and Tom Courtenay.

'Feelgood Carrey'

Every week, young film fans discuss some of the latest releases...

LIAR LIAR

Tim Thornton, 21: A satisfying jaunt that nevertheless leaves you wondering when Jim Carrey will appear in a film that deserves him.

Lesley Isaiah Thomas, 18: An average movie taken above the average by Jim Carrey. Dominic Lynch, 18: Carrey gives a predictable but enjoyable performance in this typical American feelgood movie. Damian Samuels, 19: Not-

SCREAM

Tim: Heathers meets Psycho meets Scooby Doo in a clever film that wasn't as good as I was expecting.

Lesley: A surprisingly complex script. Dominic: Moments of humour and suspense, but generally more squeak than scream. Damian: Grow your fingernails — you'll need them to chew while watching this excellent horror flick.



MARGARET'S MUSEUM

Tim: Pointless little film. Helena Bonham Carter inappropriately cast. Lesley: Helena's hennaed hair matched beautifully the colours of a Nova Scotia autumn. The film, however, is naff. Dominic: Terrifically tedious. Damian: Dull and dreary.

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THEATRE 1

Lorca receives very British treatment as a fine cast stages *Doña Rosita* at the Almeida



THEATRE 2

... while in Scarborough Ayckbourn's new play shows the master in clever but kindly mood

THE TIMES ARTS



THEATRE 3

... and the Brighton Festival prepares to stage Joshua Sobol's powerful new drama



TOMORROW

Reviews of Darcy Bussell in Glen Tetley's new ballet; and all the latest pop albums

THEATRE: Brave stab at a tricky Lorca play; Brighton gets ready to welcome Israel's finest; and the new Ayckbourn

An unofficially English rose

The protagonist is called Rosita. The subtitle is "the language of flowers". When the play waxes poetic, as it often does, the talk tends to be of gardenias and dahlias, jasmine and hyacinths. Much of the action is set in a greenhouse that, as Anthony Ward designs it, teems with pots and colourful plant life. You will not be surprised to hear that Lorca wrote *Rosita the Spinster* after reading about the rosa mutabilis, which opens red, gradually pale, and is dead white when it finally withers away.

Nor will you be exactly astonished to discover that the rosa mutabilis is also Rosita herself. When the play begins, she is a fresh-faced 18-year-old, determined to keep faith while the fiancé she adores is forced to live overseas. When it ends, she is 38 or thereabouts, and unlikely to get over the discovery that — well, in case you don't know the story, let me just say that a man can write endless love letters with his right hand and do something quite different with the hand on which signet rings are conventionally placed.

Lorca wrote *Doña Rosita* in 1935, after *Blood Wedding* and *Yerma* but before *The House of Bernarda Alba*. Even if Phyllida Lloyd, the

Doña Rosita, the Spinster
Almeida

present director, had experimentally transported the play from Granada circa 1900 to Lapland 2000, it would be difficult to misidentify the author. There are the trademark bursts of verse, in Peter Oswald's translation simultaneously clean, clear yet lush. Above all, there is Lorca's dismay at the frustration and destruction caused women by the repression of yearnings and passions which, because they embrace both the maternal and the erotic, seem more powerful than those felt by men.

It is not wholly Lloyd's fault if she fails to make us sense the full force of either of passion or of repression. The plot is a bit thinner than in Lorca's more famous plays. She does also introduce some bold effects. She asks Phoebe Nicholls's Rosita to dance sinuously and sensuously with her manolos, the exotic, mysterious women who undulate onstage and around her imagination. She gets Kathryn Hunter and her spinster daughters to clap and gesticulate in unison as

they chant of "out flowers crying in the rivers of their hair".

But it isn't enough. Though Lorca also introduces a half-barmy materialist philosopher and a schoolmaster in despair at the ungovernable children of the rich, we are left with no strong impression of the cruel world outside Rosita's hideaway. More importantly, it is hard to know what Phoebe Nicholls means when she admits, in a key phrase, that she has lost hope of marrying "the one I loved and still love with all my blood".

Blood? Nicholls is a fine actress, who combines vitality and vulnerability, and progresses credibly from trust to desolation; but when she screeches and bangs the wall you do not feel, as you should with Lorca, that real red stuff is bursting from her veins and scattering the room. It is the same when Eleanor Bron, Rosita's warm aunt, and Celia Imrie, her splendidly feisty housekeeper, talk of making the treacherous lover "pay with blood for what has cost blood". Blood? The final impression is of an honourable English stab at a tricky play, but maybe too honourable, and certainly too English.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Pride without enough passion: Phoebe Nicholls as the poor, lovelorn spinster Rosita, with Celia Imrie as her feisty housekeeper

Wishful non-political thinking

Andy Lavender on Joshua Sobol's new play, which Israel's Gesher Theatre is bringing to Britain

Wise of eye and soft of speech, Joshua Sobol can be counted among the grey eminences of international theatre. His latest offering, *The Village*, starts a British tour on Tuesday at the Brighton Festival. The prospect has added interest because the play is presented by Gesher Theatre, one of the more remarkable companies in world drama.

"Gesher" means "bridge", which is appropriate. The company is Russian-Israeli, and was established in 1991 by the director Yevgeny Arye, one of a number of Russian artists who came to Israel in a post-Soviet wave of emigration. Initially the company performed only in their mother tongue, but now they present each production in Hebrew as well. English audiences can follow *The Village* by means of headphones carrying simultaneous translation.

Gesher is already talked of as one of the world's leading companies. The churning of activity at its base in a warehouse in Jaffa, a short drive along the coast from Tel Aviv, evokes the halcyon spirit of the Moscow Arts Theatre, the Berliner Ensemble or the Théâtre du Soleil, where a committed group of practitioners worked together for years to develop an uncommon depth of performance. The result is a special kind of theatre, regrettably foreign to the British.

Sobol himself is in no doubt as to the company's significance. "Yevgeny came at the right time for us, when we needed an important theatre,"

he says. "Everything he does is about dealing with your existence in an important way. In Israel you are in constant contact with your deepest despair. That is why this contact with the Russians is good for us, and why theatre can become as important as it was in Shakespeare's time."

Gesher looked to Sobol for their first commission from an Israeli playwright, and *The Village* is the result. It is a tender, luminous play, almost magic-realist in its effect. It is set in the village of Sobol's childhood — Tel Mond in Palestine — in the years from 1942 (the German defeat at El Alamein) to 1947 (the conception of modern Israel). Its

central character, Yossi, is an ageless boy whom Sobol describes as a "Candide figure, a naïf in a world of change".

Sobol deliberately evokes a lost Palestine. "I tried as much as possible to create a moment of innocence in my own biography and in the history of the country," he says. "It wasn't coincidental that I wrote it in 1995, at the beginning of the peace process with the Palestinians. It was a moment of wishful thinking. I feel that our existence here is poisoned with too much history, too much politics, too much drama in the bad sense of the word. For me, it was a need to go back to a time when there was more air to breathe."

The play progresses through a series of imagistic scenes — "memory explosions", Sobol calls them — presented mostly from Yossi's point of view. Yossi's father, a barista with his Arab friend Sayid over the price of nature. The community includes a bicycling rabbi, a cheery British Army captain, a young woman who escapes the Holocaust, and a splendid bohemian opera singer.

The production centres on a large revolving ring, made of wooden boards. Bulrushes grow in the middle and around the edges. A faded theatre curtain descends towards the back of the ring, allowing characters and ob-

jects to appear on the revolve and disappear again.

"*The Village* starts as an idyllic play but becomes a tragedy," says Sobol. "But one which has nothing to do with character or vice, but with history. It invites people to go back to a pre-political moment in their own life, where human relations counted for more than political positions. I knew I was writing a Utopian play."

Some may find it too sweet. Certainly Israel Demidov plays Yossi not only as young but as endlessly naïve. But this is appropriate if *The Village* is to mark its difference from the distressing strictures of Israel's current home policy.

As the play moves to its conclusion there is a wireless transmission of the United Nations count of votes, determining the creation of an independent Jewish state. The revolve turns, carrying Sayid, who has come to say goodbye after receiving orders from the Supreme Arab Committee to pack his bags. Jew and Arab are enemies. Yossi begins and ends the play as a gravedigger. A manservant of death, a Shakespearean fool, a contemporary Israeli. "What is easier to reach?" he asks. "Tomorrow? Or yesterday?" Sobol leaves his play on this simple, difficult question.

● *The Village* plays at the Brighton Festival: Gardner Centre (01273 707794), May 6-10; Newcastle Playhouse (0191 230 5151), May 13-17; Cambridge Arts Theatre (01223 503333), May 23-24; Manchester Dancehouse Theatre (0161 275 9731), May 27-31; and LIFT 97: Lyric Theatre Hammersmith (0181 741 2311), June 3-7.



Vladimir Halemky (Sayid), Israel Demidov (Yossi), Leonid Kanevsky (Chaim)

CONCERT: Poor sound and lighting mar some fine playing; plus conductor and soloist in perfect harmony

Messiaen lost in space

OLIVIER Messiaen would surely have been delighted by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's account of his *Des Canyons aux étoiles*. Apart from the statistics — a full house for the first Scottish performance of a score so demanding that it is rarely heard anywhere — there was the sheer quality of the playing, not least from the inspired piano soloist, Rolf Hind.



BBC SSO/Brabbins
Glasgow Tramway

The composer might not, on the other hand, have been very happy about some aspects of the presentation of the work in the Tramway in Glasgow. A place with its own cheerlessly alternative atmosphere (and a faintly perceptible sound of running water somewhere in the background), it is actually less reverberant than the average concert hall. And, like Messiaen's other large-scale acoustic visions, *Des Canyons* needs a cathedral aura. Without such help, a wind-machine, a sand-machine or a trumpet blowing into a detached mouthpiece sounds frankly no more than just that, with no added value in scenic or poetic significance.

Attempts to compensate by means of lighting effects above and behind the orchestra were singularly misguided: Messiaen's sounds are linked to their own very particular colours and should not have alien-

ideas imposed on them. In the darkened auditorium, moreover, those who had been lucky enough to acquire a programme were quite unable to read the descriptive headings applied to the 12 movements of the piece. They might not mean very much in the strictly literal sense but it is important to know that you are listening to *The Resurrection* and the *Song of the Star of Aldebaran* rather than, say, *Interstellar Call*.

As it happens, those two movements were among the most successful in Martyn Brabbins's interpretation of the composer's celestial reactions to the wonders of Utah. David Flack played the extended interstellar horn solo as evocatively as possible in the circumstances, with some weirdly half-voiced echoes, and the orchestra in general created an atmosphere for the *Resurrection* as serene as that enjoyed by the sleeping lovers in a very similar movement in the *Turanguilla Symphony*.

GERALD LARNER

Art and craft movements

Philharmonia
Festival Hall

calibre was a joy and privilege.

If Sanderling is impressive in Beethoven, he might have been born to conduct Bruckner, so perfectly does his crazy style suit the granite rock-faces of the latter's symphonies. He follows the 1889 version of the Third — the shortest, shorn as it is of vast swathes of music, including explicit quotations from Wagner deleted at the latter's request. With the possible exception of the disguised polka in the finale, Sanderling's tempi did not seem ponderous. Yet there was a rugged strength here — even, at the first movement's close, a palpable ferocity.

Sanderling knows too, however, just how to light up the score when required: under his direction, the Philharmonia's brass section suffuses or spotlights the texture, rather than — as one too often

hears elsewhere — blasting the opposition out of the water.

In the early evening concert, James MacMillan introduced two works by fellow Scots, James Clapperton, a student of Michael Finnissy, owes something to the school of New Complexity, but *The Preaching of the Swallow* contrasts hyperactivity in the birdlike twittering of the solo violin (Maya Ivabuchi) with minimal movement in the orchestral accompaniment.

Two movements from Gordon McPherson's *Handguns: A Suite* were also conducted ably by Nicholas Kok. The sound-worlds of Scottish folksong and James Bond films come together here in a work that deals seriously with firearms as objects of reverence as well as terror. In the aftermath of the Dunblane tragedy, McPherson was recently obliged to change the title of his work and remove all references to guns from his programme notes.

BARRY MILLINGTON

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Her paper his downfall: Katharine Graham with Richard Nixon

Andrew Knight admires the unsparing honesty of 'America's most powerful woman'

Don't stop the presses

PERSONAL HISTORY
By Katharine Graham
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £25
ISBN 0 297 51964 X

Katharine Graham was born 80 years ago, the fourth of five children. Her life from privileged if chilly childhood to warm and undimmed old age has been about the creation of one of America's great hometown newspaper monopolies.

The *Washington Post*, however, is a monopoly with a difference: the hometown in question happens to be the political capital of the Western world. Mrs Graham's father, Eugene Meyer, was a money-maker and national servant of the old school, whose purchase of the *Post* became, among many achievements, his true passion. But his paper was nowhere in Washington until he, followed by his son-in-law Phil Graham (Kay's husband), then by Kay herself, and finally by her son Donald, obliterated the opposition. In the process, *The Washington Post* was in the eye of every storm

which its hometown could stir up — Hitler's and Tojo's war; the Roosevelt and Eisenhower presidencies; JFK; Cuba; the assassinations; Vietnam; the nemesis of LBJ; the Pentagon papers. And of course Watergate, the disgrace of a President. The *Post* had to fight its Watergate battles while also waging — and winning — a war against its print unions: that is to say, with its hands tied. Along the way, it acquired *Newsweek* and television interests.

Yet for all the drama of these huge events, vividly and clearly as it is told, Mrs Graham's *Personal History* is remarkable for quite other reasons.

Mrs Graham may be, in tabloid jargon, America's "most powerful woman". But in this history she does not spare herself. She had a father who talked newspapers with his favourite girl, a top education and a cub-reporter training on the trade-union waterfront in San Francisco. Yet Kay Graham was little equipped to carry the burden she ended up with. Crushed by an overwhelming mother, vaguely isolated by anti-Semitic slights, a little gawky, materially pampered (to this day, she says, she cannot iron a dress),

Mrs Graham will still "just meekly go to Siberia" in any restaurant whose headwaiter sends her there. Dogged by her American generation's feminist complex, by its media pieties (which her husband refreshingly did not share), by bad advice from worthies like Robert McNamara, beset by hesitancy and nerves at critical moments, Kay Graham is never her own best friend. Except in one all-important respect: her character. Mrs Graham is straight, honest, loyal in friendship, quick with intuition; and she loves to laugh at absurdity, particularly if she has had a hand in creating it. These qualities saw her through her life, through endless office arm-wrestles and terrible domestic suffering. They

see her through this book. Suffering came to Mrs Graham from her husband. Phil Graham was clearly brilliant, a joyous husband and father, an artful and compulsive deal maker, admired, loved, influential with successive White Houses. But in an era when neither Kay Jamison's work nor lithium treatment had been heard of, Phil Graham was also a manic depressive in mounting crisis. He put his own creation at *The Washington Post* in peril, attempted to confiscate its control from his wife's family, which he quit. The appalling end of his story, and how Mrs Graham met over 30 years the challenge he left, make a tale you would hardly believe were it not so scrupulously, readably and bravely told.

Andrew Knight served in *Washington* for *The Economist* in 1968-70.

What others dreamed of seeing

A daring poet's most daring act was to abandon poetry for Africa, says Derwent May

By the year 1873, the French poet Arthur Rimbaud, still only 19, had written all the poems that were to make him famous. Then this son of a soldier and a peasant gave up poetry, wandered about the world, and from the age of 25 lived in Aden and East Africa as a trader in coffee, ivory and old Remington rifles. He came back to France 11 years later with a tumour on his knee, and died of it in his sister's care.

The poems went on with a life of their own. The descent they recorded into a phantasmagoric world of disordered senses — a world of illuminations and hellfire — made him a mythical hero for the next few generations of French poets. He was the first of the guiding star of the Surrealists. But when, long after his death, his letters from Africa started appearing, a deep disappointment ran through the French literary world.

What did they show? Albert Camus put it most poignantly in *The Rebel* (*L'homme révolté*). "The one who sang under torture, who had cursed God and beauty, who had armed himself against justice and hope, now just wants to marry 'someone with a future'. The man-king in a universe without gods now carries around with him eight kilos of gold in a money-belt that cramps his stomach and which, he grumbles, is giving him dysentery." "The myth can only be sustained," Camus declares, "by ignoring these conclusive letters".

Now, in *Somebody Else*, Charles Nicholl looks into the matter again. He has been through all the surviving papers, he has been to Aden and to those remote parts of Ethiopia that Rimbaud came to know so well, and he has produced as complete a picture of Rimbaud's "second life" as we are likely to get.

Rimbaud certainly gave up poetry, never mentioning it again. He became a very business-like trader, working first for a firm in Aden and making trips for them across the Gulf into Africa, then living in the tiny town of Harar in the Abyssinian highlands trading for himself.

Mr Nicholl fills in the background with wonderfully vivid word-pictures: the warehouse in Aden (still standing today) where Rimbaud watched over a harem of Indian soldiers' wives cleaning the coffee

beans while the sunlight broke through the shutters; Rimbaud's great camel-caravans making their way through the Danakil desert into the hills, with Abyssinian bodyguards protecting the party against the ferocious hunting local tribes; the square in Harar where an ostrich might walk by and where Rimbaud poisoned the dogs who urinated on his drying hides.

As for Rimbaud himself, a surprisingly attractive picture of him slowly emerges, mostly from the memories of fellow-traders and passing explorers. He had become a taciturn man, severe with his employees, and rarely smiling. Yet he was a popular man, who made the company laugh with his sardonic humour, and a generous one, who often helped Arabs and Africans in need. He lived very simply, learnt Arabic, and followed Islamic ways when he was with Muslims. He lived sometimes with Abyssinian women. The French priests in Harar thought him a respectable unbeliever. He was not, in spite of rumours, a slave-trader.

Mr Nicholl ingeniously finds lines from his teenage masterpiece *The Drunken Boat* (*Le bateau ivre*) that seem to prefigure these scenes. But the breach with his former poetic personality seems complete. He had turned away from fantasies to the hard world of facts, and where there had been an extravagant impulsiveness there remained only resolute willpower.

Why did he change? Perhaps his two years of squalid living with the poet Verlaine when he first arrived in Paris had really repelled him deeply, in spite of all his wild writhings. The sordid adventure had ended up with Verlaine shooting Rimbaud and going to jail. It is easy to forget that the schoolboy Rimbaud had written some poems very different from *Le bateau ivre* — touching, humorous poems, such as his picture of the five little boys sitting in the snow at a baker's cellar-window, transfixed by the sight and smell of the baking bread.

Mr Nicholl's last pages are painful. After his knees began to swell, Rimbaud had a nightmarish journey back to the coast, lying on a litter, and when he got to Marseilles his leg was amputated. His outbursts of rage and pain were so

powerful that Camus wrote that "it is only here that the bourgeois trader rejoins the tortured adolescent we loved so much." One cannot help feeling, unromantically, that the "bourgeois trader" might have preferred not to.

At the time of his death, as it happened, Verlaine was working on a new edition of some of Rimbaud's poems — but when he heard the news, he did no more than mention it in a parenthesis in a letter he was writing. The man was dead — the myth could now take wing. Mr Nicholl does not destroy the myth, which has its own legitimate history. But through the haze of time he brings us back a potent shadow of the man.

SOMEBODY ELSE
Arthur Rimbaud in Africa, 1880-91
By Charles Nicholl
Cape, £18.99
ISBN 0 224 04376 6



After *Le bateau ivre*, a "second life" revealed: Harar trader, photographed by Rimbaud in 1883

Philosophers of a cottage industry

Norman Thomas di Giovanni

GENTS
By Warwick Collins
Marion Boyars, £11.95
ISBN 0 7145 3028 2

MULTUM in parvo. In style, Warwick Collins's sixth novel follows the track laid down in his highly successful last book, *The Rationalist*: a lean, precise, lucid prose that grips the reader in the delight of word music. But the tale this time could not be more different. A brief, mischievous story, it concerns three West Indians — Ez, Jason, and Reynolds, all immigrants from Jamaica — who run a London men's public toilet notorious for the casual sex that takes place there. When asked by the local council to "clean out the swamp", the three are so successful that the establishment's takings fall by 40 per cent, and their very livelihood comes under threat of the axe.

It is deceptively simple, but at the same time the novel is lighthearted and profound, funny and tender, with a sure touch that eschews the slightest hint of voyeurism or political correctness. The obliqueness of the prose, with its colour and lift, its laconic silences, is haunting. In the way he contrives to say little and tell all, the author bewitches us with his artistry. Here's a sample, when Reynolds introduces newcomer Ez on his first day of work to another cleaner, Jason: "a serious young Rastafarian... Reynolds turned to address Jason formally. 'Look after him. He join us now.' With a brief nod to Reynolds, Jason asked: 'You from Kingston?'

'Greenwich,' Jason nodded. 'Loud place.' Reynolds translated. 'Loud means good.' Ez nodded. 'Fat Lion Stevens?' Jason asked. 'He sober.' Jason smiled. 'Too bad.' 'Better show him the ropes. Jason, man,' Reynolds said.

"Can't talk all day." One of the novel's subtleties and one of Collins's subversive hallmarks is the quiet power with which he invests his women characters. Martha, Ez's wife, keeps reappearing in what at first appear to be marginal scenes. But it is she, with patient strength and natural wisdom, who guides her husband into ultimate tolerance. Martha's unspoken aim is to get the best out of everyone, and in the book's poignant sub-plot she guides Ez almost wordlessly into acceptance of his son Stevie's ambiguous choice of career as a hairdresser.

ANOTHER mark of the book's subversion is Collins's portrayal of Jason, the Rasta with two wives, as something of an old prophet who wanders the desert. "Jason was an evocation of the African soul. His philosophy counselled constant good works towards his fellow man... It forbade drink. It advocated asceticism and personal discipline."

It is significant that this novel, like *The Rationalist*, began life as a screenplay. It has made for an astonishing directness and economy and for visual immediacy, with nothing spelled out and nothing left out. Is this moral tale a parable for secular liberalism, for tolerance, for true — that is, unrigged — market values? Quite possibly. What is certain is that in its perfect wedding of character and plot, content and style, *Gents* stands as a genuine work of literature.

Going home from home

Ardashir Vakil

EXTRAVAGANT STRANGERS
Edited by Caryl Phillips
Faber, £7.50
ISBN 0 571 19086 3

that *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* was a bestseller all over Europe and America in the early 1790s, that Doris Lessing was born in Kerman-

way hot." Mansfield's story is a wonderfully fluid evocation of London in the Twenties, of a young woman's dreamy-eyed illusions about marriage and class, "because her heritage was that tragic optimism, which is all too often only the inheritance of youth."

There are lots of famous writers here: J.G. Ballard, V.S. Naipaul, and Shiva Naipaul (the latter's description of searching for a bedsit and trawling through a seedy pub in Earl's Court is one of the best pieces

hiding away from the cold blasts...

There is no turning away, in an anthology of this kind, from the ugly brutality and ignorance of racism. E.R. Braithwaite chooses to write from the point of view of two white youths out for a jaunt to "spade" unfortunate enough to be walking a lonely street in the environs of Brick Lane. Their plan misfires. They fall to the ground under the reeking breath of a man, larger, blacker and stronger than they had expected. The result is both predictable and harrowing.

The narrator of Abdulrazak Gurnah's story tries to come to terms with a more familiar immigrant-story of inadequacy and alienation. He lives in a town of cathedral bells and spires, local pubs and parks, all places where he feels unwelcome. At the end of the extract, the protagonist, uprooted from his home in East Africa, is left pondering the "grim of empire that had filled his generation with the despising anxiety of frightened men."

Caryl Phillips has assembled a glistering array of "diasporic droplets", a celebration of the cosmopolitan strengths of British writing. As the protagonist of *Reef*, Ramesh Gunasekera's feckless and poetic novel says, "I was learning that human history is always a story of somebody's diaspora."



Something in common: Mansfield, Kipling, Naipaul

shah, Persia, and that V.S. Naipaul, beset by illness, and devastated by the deaths of his younger brother and sister, withdrew from writing fiction for six or seven years.

This collection gets better the further you read, starting with the cantankerous letters of Wyndham Lewis: "Mr Orwell (as they call him here 'bore-well') is an excitable idiot," and T.S. Eliot's stuffy accounts of wartime Bedford Square. Soon after, one is charmed by the *Tiredness of Rosabel* by Katherine Mansfield, and delighted by C.L.R. James's *Encounter with Edith Sitwell*: "Miss Sitwell replied that she called Mr Lawrence the head of the Jaeger school because his poetry was like Jaeger underwear, hot, soft and woolly: whereupon the Jaeger company replied that while their products were soft and woolly, they begged to deny that they were in any

the book), Kipling, Orwell, Penelope Lively, Ben Okri and Salman Rushdie, whose article on the 1983 general election is a reminder of what a strong, intelligent and entertaining polemical essayist he can be.

More revelatory and exhilarating are the works of the slightly less well-known authors. Take for instance the excerpt from Sam Selvon's *Lonely Londoners*, a funny and tender novel about newly arrived immigrants from the Caribbean, so little read today except in school anthologies. Written in Trinidadian/London patois, the passage of writing is rhythmic, sexy, bold and innovative. The best way to read him is aloud, in your best West Indian accent. "Oh what a time it is when summer comes to the city and all them girls throw away heavy winter coats and wearing light summer frocks so you can see the legs and shapes that was

Island records

Ross Leckie

FOR THE ISLANDS I SING
An Autobiography
George Mackay Brown
John Murray, £16
ISBN 0 7195 3628 7

HE never married, never had a job, never travelled, never owned a car. He was his art. For almost 50 years, when not recovering from bouts of drinking, TB or depression, George Mackay Brown sat each day at the kitchen table in his council house on his native Orkney and wrote poems, short stories, novels, plays. When he died last year he left a monumental memorial.

This book, his 39th, he wrote in 1985. But in keeping with his father's advice — "whatever happens, keep humble" — he did not want it published until after his death. He added an appendix in 1993, and there one feels his leaving, "just as in November the light lessens". Still, though, he reaches out: "Everything we do sets the whole web of creation trembling..." He died as he had lived, a virgin, mystic, seer.

With the exception of some years as a student in Edinburgh and rare forays back, Mackay Brown never left the Orkney that informed him. As he says, "some kind of ancient wisdom whispers always, 'Stay where you are.' For that reason alone, this autobiography is entirely *self-generated*. It is a story of a mind and of a spirit.

So there are few revelations here about other people's lives, and only two about his own.

The Scottish press have already seized with the prurience that sells papers on what he says about his Edinburgh muse, Sella Cartwright. But the relationship was purely Platonic. The extent of his drinking is now public information, though he explains how it gave him an "insight into the workings of the mind".

It is the genesis of that mind which makes this book compelling. We see how, from the "ancient guilts, rebukes in the silence of thought" of the Calvinism to which he was born he came to convert to Catholicism. We see how the "rhythms of the land and sea" that were his subject grew in his mind to "beget a pattern and a harmony".

This book and the other work of the man who wrote it prove Kant's dictum that the greatest journey a man can make is the journey inside his own head. Few have gone further than George Mackay Brown.

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Penguin pudding

Sara Wheeler

BELOW THE CONVERGENCE
Voyages toward Antarctica 1699-1839
By Alan Gurney
Norton, £18.95
ISBN 0 393 03490 8

Until the late 18th century, Antarctica was a mythical land crouching on the far horizons of the human imagination. The Ancient Greeks sensed that it was there, and the idea evolved of a continent at the bottom of the world that was both fertile and populated. The myth flourished until James Cook sailed across the Antarctic Circle in 1773. "Nothing down here worth having," the great man declared. "Too cold."

Alan Gurney's aim "is to sketch some of the voyages by explorers, sealers, and whalers which, over a span of a hundred years, eliminated *Terra australis incognita* from the world's maps and whittled it down to a much smaller continent — Antarctica." The maritime frontier he chooses, the Convergence of the book's title, is the meeting of two bodies of water of different temperatures and salinity. At the Convergence the freezing seas around Antarctica meet the warmer waters of the sub-Antarctic, forming a band that snakes between 50°S and 60°S latitude. It is a definite biogeographical frontier.

The search for the great southern land was one that inflamed public interest. Theories about Antarctica proliferated like frogspawn, and nobody wanted to be left out of the pond. Swift predictably put the book in, announcing his intention to publish an exact description of Antarctica "collected with great care and pain from 999 learned and pious authors of undoubted veracity... the work will contain exact accounts of all the provinces, colonies and mansions of that spacious country". He goes on to suggest that Antarctica be deployed as a penal colony.

The years unravelled, and islands were pencilled on to the map as the Southern Ocean was brutally ransacked: a quarter of a century of sealing saw 20 tons of elephant seal oil sold on the London market and at least 1.2 million fur seal skins taken by American and British sealers. *Below the Convergence* is peppered with thrilling *Boy's Own* tales of tall-masted ships nudging through the pack ice. James Weddell and James Cook each score two out of the book's 12 chapters: the latter bestrides the period like a colossus.

Much of the text consists of discursive and entertaining episodes from maritime history. Besides material on the development of navigational equipment there is a whole chapter on scurvy and the hapless seaman's diet, riveting above all due to the fantastic stupidity of the Admiralty who persisted in dishing out marmalade of carrots long after the antiscorbutic properties of lemons had been discovered. (Gurney suggests that if lemon juice had been issued in 1733, as had been advised, the war in America might have had a different result.) The last leaps to life when Gurney boards the ships and quotes from journals, letters, and diaries made from penguin eggs, for example, was enormously popular with the ratings.

He is a competent stylist with a forgivable weakness for sentiment and cliché ("Fortune smiled on Weddell that summer"). The use of the dramatic present grates at times, but on the whole this is an eminently readable book.

Antarctica comes into focus as the pages turn, and by the end of Gurney's narrative it lies, still pristine, waiting for the men who would give it a history. Gurney's subjects were travelling towards the frontiers of knowledge, and this entertaining book offers a window on to the most important journey of all — the unending voyage of the human spirit.

Marianne Wiggins surveys Pynchon's 18th-century landscape and finds the going hard

Trouble in toeing the line

I can think of only three contemporary novelists writing in the English language whose impending or most current work can or will or did generate a public following of such magnitude as to create a genuine, spontaneous publishing event — Thomas Pynchon, J.D. Salinger and Salman Rushdie. All three have private lives which provoke vicarious, often voyeuristic, responses from both their readers and non-readers. But what distinguishes them is not so much the details of their singular domestic circumstances, but the fact that all three have written modern masterpieces. Before they went into hiding.

Writers disappear from public view all the time, in fact, to go and write, and no one seems to notice. And not a few writers sit pat and flatly refuse to come out and tell the world at publication what they've eaten for breakfast or how many skeletons they've got in their closets. It takes a writer of extraordinary literary power to hold the sort of attention Pynchon, Salinger and Rushdie command.

I doubt Jeffrey Archer, as popular as he is, could increase his celebrity by disappearing, although his in-tray might collapse under a previously unexpressed influx of grateful letters. Byatt, Kelman, Carey, Gardiner — what would happen if any of

MASON & DIXON
By Thomas Pynchon
Cape, £16.99
ISBN 0 224 05001 X

these former Booker Prize winners suddenly went AWOL? And where was Michael Ondaatje at this year's Academy Awards? Did anybody even notice he was missing?

Rushdie's isolation is unique and cannot be compared to any other, but, like Pynchon and Salinger, he wrote a popular masterpiece early in his career, which shook people into a new state of awareness about modern writing and went straight to the heart of an entire generation.

And that's the key: no giant talent, no event. No genius, no hype.

And hype there is, aplenty, folks, around this current specimen. No picture, no person — no problem — no Pynchon. Just 773 pages bound together and titled *Mason & Dixon*, published simultaneously in Britain and the United States as an event. In the United States, only 100 advance copies have been printed; in Britain, none. Which means nothing to the general public, but means a whole (non-alcoholic) Lost Weekend to anyone expected to review the book in time for publication. And having dutifully fulfilled that commission, Dear Reader, I can now (have a drink and) acquit Mr Pynchon's publishers of all charges of wrongful hype in limiting advance reads of



this tome. I suspect they didn't want it leaked that what they've got here is an overlong, unmodulated, pun-infested, hollow, puerile, rambling dud. It neither informs nor entertains. It embarrasses its author. It is, despite tedious attempts at wit and wordplay, miserably unfunny. Utany.

Which is very sad indeed, coming from a writer who, in *V* and *Gravity's Rainbow*, exercised a perfectly pitched wit aimed unerringly at everything and anything smug and self-congratulatory in American society. Our Tom, as he will always be regarded by his fans (myself among them) was straight-on, wild, zany, larger-than-life, brilliant, unpredictable.

Well, Our Tom is missing yet again — not only from the phonebook but from his own book.

Mason & Dixon is set in the later part of the 18th century. The

anonymous Mason and Dixon, astronomers and surveyors, are Charles Mason, later of Greenwich Observatory, and Jeremiah Dixon, his Georgian sidekick, both of whom are known in today's fiction as real people, about whom not enough is known on which to hang a full biography, but about whom just enough is known for an author inclined to stretch the truth to have some fun without incurring damages.

To British readers I should perhaps explain that for an American writer of Pynchon's age and education (he was born in 1937 and went to state schools on Long Island and upstate New York, well before political correctness dictated the curricula), the more familiar century after our own is the 18th — it's the century Americans learn first when we study history, the centu-

ry when the United States began. So to employ linguistic quirks peculiar to the Age of Reason (when Nouns were capitalised) is a beaten path well-trodden by our modern heavyweights. We've all read *The Declaration*, so you better do it as well. If you're going to do it, and Pynchon doesn't "Excuse me," Dixon characteristically inquires in what only Pynchon can believe reads like a North Country accent, "Whah's thah smokin' Object in thy Mouth, thah thah keep puffin' on?" Well, excuse me, but Tobacco, on the whole, stopped being a funny unknown Object around the time the Surgeon General spoke, already more than 30 years ago and Pynchon fails to shine new light on it or on any Object, for that matter, which lends the entire massive opus a tired, been there, done that, Entropy. What brings Mason and Dixon together

in the first place, in Pynchon's version of a Laurel and Hardy astronomer act ("Another bonny gahn-on thah've got us into," Dixon frequently complains), are the Transits of Venus in 1761 and 1769, events which the American historian Garry Wills, in *Inventing America* calls "momentous" in determining solar distances. Surely a wonderful tale could be spun on sighting the Transits alone, but Pynchon fails there, too. On and on the book labours as Mason and Dixon travel to America to site their famous line between the Penns and Calverts. It could have been a fabulous tale about the artificial boundaries we construct among ourselves. Instead, it is a self-admiring conceit. After nearly 800 pages, this protracted exercise delivers one justified conclusion only: Tom? You need to get out more, man.

Celebration of an unquiet life

Duncan Fallowell
welcomes the
authorised life of
a master of
English letters

Surprisingly the authorised biography of Cyril Connolly, who died in 1974, is only appearing now. It has been delayed by the refusal of his last wife, Deirdre, to authorise the use of his personal archive and she did her late husband no favours. As a result his reputation suffered a severe eclipse — unjustly, for he is a major figure in English letters of the 20th century, richer in style, content and associations than many more celebrated names.

He was indeed its most famous failure, analysing in profound and

CYRIL CONNOLLY
A Life
By Jeremy Lewis
Jonathan Cape, £25
ISBN 0 224 03702 2

vivid essays his inability to produce great works, in a permanent state of rebellion within himself and against small-mindedness in others. One of the many joys reading Connolly is in his adoration of the rebel. He himself was too lacking in courage, too addicted to society and snob applause, to make anything of his rebellion other than a Trojan horse within the gates, but that is a most valuable anomaly.

Finally — and I don't recall that he precisely identified this — he was defeated by his knowledge. He could never entirely abandon learnt things and was therefore a connoisseur — that is, he had plenty of fantasy but no imagination.

However, he triumphed in the creation of one masterpiece, *The Unquiet Grave*, a celebration of the good life by an anxious melancholic



Contented? Connolly with son Matthew at home in Eastbourne

of breathtaking candour. It is probably one of the dozen great books to come out of England this century, certainly the least parochial, and would of itself justify Mr Lewis's 653 riveting pages. Furthermore, the deflection of Connolly's enormous gifts into reviews and articles made him the inventor of New Journalism about 40 years before its appearance in America in the 1960s.

The man emerges from Lewis's biography as more bohemian and strange than from the previous,

unauthorised one by Clive Fisher, less the clever Etonian-Oxfordian, more the wounded original, more existentialist in fact. Connolly's moody slobbishness and lack of humbug can be spectacular — no wonder Evelyn Waugh, a phoney to his fingertips, was so disturbed by him.

Connolly made no secret of his homosexual loves in youth nor of his successful pursuit of young women later on. He relished food, wine, antiques, 18th-century houses, trav-

el, friends, animals, but lack of money made his life formless. Therefore he worshipped elegant form. This, combined with his misfit temperament and physical ugliness, made him one of the most seductive advocates of dandyism.

Mr Lewis's recreation of the life is rigorous yet charged with a lyrical and moving empathy — I spotted only two unforgivable howlers (pages 155 and 304). He can on occasions be as droll as Connolly whose father is described as "A towering figure in the world of snails, and South African snails in particular". We are given not only a factual narrative but also a progression of values — Lewis emphasises what people thought and what they wanted — which brings all the other participants in Connolly's life dramatically alive.

Connolly's sexual affairs and three marriages, all wildly overlapping, emerge no more clearly here than in Fisher's account, but Lewis has the advantage of being able to quote from unpublished letters and journals and, most revealingly of all, Connolly's unused manuscripts. The main lines of the story are not altered but are deliciously refreshed. One does learn something very attractive and new: Connolly could weep in public. It goes well with the overweight sponger of grubby habits and kleptomaniac tendencies. The footnotes are exceptionally juicy and not to be skipped.

Connolly's dream of being a genius in Paris was also the dream of an enlargement and escape. He stretched the elastic but it never snapped — and eventually contracted to a villa in Eastbourne (where he had been at prep school), two children, and the weekly review. Despite aspects of contentment there is a horror in this redeemed only by his desperate attempts to be unfaithful to his wife. And yet throughout he was somehow marked by the gods. As Edmund Wilson wrote, Connolly, for all his faults, "has a wit and a distinctive, an innate cachet of the artist that none of his contemporaries (whom I know) has."

Required: death or disappearance

"A SAINT is what I am not. A saint is: over there. Not here." Isabel finds the beatification of her late aunt Josephine hard to believe. The nun had fostered the girl since infancy, bringing her up in a convent where the dreariness of religious life and the silliness of the other sisters has become increasingly difficult to bear. Yet while Josephine is alive, nobody else knows of her impatience nor of her hunger for knowledge, good conversation and sexual freedom. Even outside the walls, a strict male world promotes humility as the highest female virtue: self-effacement is the only way an intelligent woman can survive.

The same repressive system operates through all the stories threaded through this novel. And whether born now or in Roman times, most of these 12 female saints are impossible: Saint Christine, an angry, fat teenager who flies; Saint Petronilla, the early feminist; Saint Paula, who drives her own daughter to fatal anorexia; Saint Agnes, a proto-punk; and Saint Uncumber, who bites off her father's penis. Josephine's life looks pretty tame by comparison. But as her story develops she helps explain how strict male dogma can twist the course of any young woman's life.

THE stories examine what it takes for a female to be judged saintly. The first priority seems to be death (preferably an unpleasant one), a preserved or disappeared body (puffery is suspect) and the survival of few personal details. Such details carry echoes of every convent schoolgirl's handbook, *The Lives of the Saints*, and the author acknowledges the influence of St Teresa of Avila in her own story of Saint Josephine. But whereas religious writers reduced their creatures to two-dimensional icons, Roberts has put flesh on their miraculous bones. The flowering of teenage bodies and the discovery of emergent sexuality are conveyed with all the insight of a modern novelist.

For many of these individuals, puberty is the point where the



Roberts asks what is saintly

Aisling Foster

IMPOSSIBLE
SAINTS
By Michelle Roberts
Little, Brown, £14.99
ISBN 0 316 03457 5

saintly journey begins. Their relationships with adoring fathers are changed: they have become chattels, which the poor old male finds almost impossible to ignore. For some, that new relationship involves incest, but often more complex feelings of fear and rage emerge. Most of the young women try to escape: but a couple of them play along with their fathers' requirements and suffer death for their kindness.

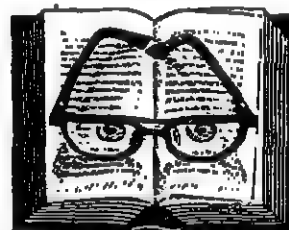
Michelle Roberts's familiar blend of irony and sensual language deliberately subverts the naive conventions of hagiography. There are striking contrasts, too, between the rags of old convictions and individual thought: "Belief in her vocation... had fallen off her like a dress she stepped out of and kicked to one side. Belief in God Himself was the problem now." Such tensions will make the lives of these *Impossible Saints* required reading for schoolgirls in a post-religious world.

Going for a song?

THERE are more reasons for buying books than are dreamt of by many accountants. Of course, collecting books is a fetish, but it is also the essential germ of much new work. Proper writers need to be readers (which is why not everyone has a novel in him), and the writing of the old is the inspiration of the new.

Consequently, the worlds of the auctioneer and the scholar overlap in unexpected ways. Consider the sale of a late-18th-century manuscript anthology of 40 or so songs and arias by Haydn, J.C. Bach and others. It was bought by Richard Luckett of Magdalene College, Cambridge, who recognised the importance of one of the less obvious pieces: a copy of the pioneering 1775 melodrama *Ariadne auf Naxos* by Georg Benda (1722-45), in a hitherto unknown English translation. Of this "declaimed opera" and its companion piece *Medea*, Mozart wrote to his father: "Both are really excellent... and I like these works of his so much that I carry them around with me." In writing the melodramas, Benda was adapting an idea of Rousseau's, and anticipating Wagner by introducing recurrent motifs.

Dr Luckett also recognised the initials of the original owner of the miscellany, the singer Mary Anne Barthelmon, whose husband was a composer, a violinist and a close friend of Haydn. But this was more than a dealer's "interesting provenance" or "fine association". The great significance of the *Ariadne* translation for Dr Luckett was that some ten years before he had been asked by Christopher



BIBLIOMANE

Hogwood to translate the *Medea* text into English for a series of performances by the Academy of Ancient Music. He knew that 20th-century language would not mesh with the 18th-century music, and devised an idiom that "while being neither 'modern' nor 'period' endeavoured above all to preserve the rhythm and the sense".

So how did his work stand up beside that of a contemporary translator? Modestly he says that he would have kept the purchase secret if he had found that he had struck a wrong note; but as anyone who knows him will testify, no period instrument could be more authentic than Richard's sensibility. His work matched the register of the *Ariadne* most fully.

And there was another collector's pleasure to come. Only when he began wondering whether the Academy of Ancient Music might like to record and publish the two works together did he discover who had been the underbidder at the auction: Christopher Hogwood.

SOTHEBY'S also makes remarkable scholarly discoveries of its own. Recently, a book known to have existed but never previously found walked in off the street. *The Art of Singing* by Pietro Reggio, printed in Oxford in 1677, is the earliest book in English wholly about vocal technique. It deals with the baroque style later known as the Italian *bel canto*. Reggio's own *Songs* (1680) contains settings of poems by one of the century's favourite poets, Abraham Cowley.

The Art of Singing has had a spectral life because it was advertised in London in 1678 and soon afterwards (although Sotheby's do not say so) was listed in the catalogue of Archbishop Narcissus Marsh's library in Dublin. No copy, however, was thought to survive. Assessing its monetary value is very difficult, but Sotheby's estimates £6,000-£8,000 at its sale on May 16.

Now for *Love's Labour's Won*...

JIM MCCUE

SATURDAY BOOKS

The trials of
McLibel: Libby
Purves craves a
burger, plus
Madeleine
Wikham,
Raymond
Chandler and
Sheila Kitzinger

Bargains of the week — from a maritime week at Whitby to half-term holidays in the Loire and Burgundy

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MUNICH. Berlin and Düsseldorf cost £79 return in British Airways current world offers. Details: 0345 222111.

AIR CHINA will provide a free domestic connection to Heathrow for passengers booking its weekly flight to Hong Kong. Tickets cost £625 economy, £1,399 business class. Details: 0171-630 0919.

BRITISH AIRWAYS has a £200 Cairo seat sale provided you book by May 14. Details: 0345 222111.

CAMPUS TRAVEL has a £174 return fare from Heathrow or Manchester to New York for travellers aged under 26. Details: 0171-730 2101.

AIR FRANCE has flights to Johannesburg, Cape Town or Harare for £329 from London, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh or Southampton, between May 7 and May 28. Details: Travelfinders, 0171-438 3939.

HOLIDAYS

FOURTEEN nights for the price of seven at Tonghai Bay Hotel on Koh Samui, Thailand, is on offer from today until June 30. Prices from £899 a person, including return flights via Bangkok from Destination Far East. Details: 0171-336 7788.

TENERIFE for £169 a person for a week's First Choice self-catering holiday with a flight from East Midlands tomorrow is available from Co-op Travelcare. Details: 0161-827 1030.

KOS, the Greek island, is available for £179 for a week's self-catering from Odyssey Holidays with a flight from Gatwick next Wednesday. Details: 0181-343 0090.

A MARITIME week at Whitby from May 10 is on offer from Countrywide Holidays to coincide with the visit of Captain Cook's ship, *The Endeavour*. Price: £270 a person with guest house accommodation, excursions and meals. Details: 0161-446 2236.

KENYA for a fortnight for £389 a person is available from Advantage Travel Centres. Fly from Gatwick on May 11; B&B accommodation. Details: 0990 881888.

KITZBUHEL, Austria, is on offer at savings of £100 a couple from Crystal Holidays. A week's all-inclusive holiday at The Mellona with flights from three UK airports on May 14, 17 and 21, now costs from £319 a person. Details: 0181-399 5144.

HALF-TERM week holidays in cottages in the Loire and Burgundy in late May are available from VFB Holidays with prices starting from £310 per property and including short ferry crossings. Details: 01242 240340.

LAS VEGAS for a week for £499 a person, staying at the Medieval-themed Excalibur and flying from Gatwick on June 9, is on offer from Unijet. Details: 0990 336336.

EARLY booking discounts of up to 50 per cent are available from Going Places on selected Holland America Line cruises. Details: 0191-233 2563.

HOTELS

MOAT HOUSE Hotels nationwide are offering a variety of themed events and menus tonight to celebrate the election. Most hotels will also provide big-screen television coverage. Details: 0645 213214.

WHITBREAD opened its 150th Travel Inn budget hotel this week at Norwich, opposite the Norfolk Showground at the Longwater Interchange. All rooms, which can sleep up to two adults and two children, cost £36.50 a night. Details: 01582 414341.

SUMMER savings of up to 60 per cent are on offer at more than 70 Radisson SAS Hotels in Europe from June 21 until August 18. To qualify, guests have to buy a Family Magic Hotel Pass costing £9, which also provides discounts to local attractions. Details: 0800 374411.

SEE the show *Riverdance* at the Playhouse Theatre in Edinburgh on May 17 and stay at the Jarvis Learmonth Hotel overnight for £99.95 a person. Price includes coach transfer, ticket and accommodation. Reservations through

Superbreak Mini-Holidays. Details: 0161-238 5257.

A TWO-DAY special romantic break at the newly refurbished Manor Hotel, a 16th-century country house outside St Albans in Hertfordshire costs from £72.50 a person a night, including English breakfast and dinner. Details: 01727 864444.

THREE NIGHTS for the price of two are available during the May Bank Holiday at the seven Hanover International Hotels in the UK and Ireland. Details: 0345 444123.

ENJOY a champagne afternoon tea at Le Meridien Hotel, Piccadilly, as well as a ticket to the Summer Exhibition at the adjacent Royal Academy, for £21 a person from June 1 until August 10. Details: 0171-734 8000.

DISCOUNTS at Hilton International hotels in Europe are available to Visa cardholders until September 30, based on double occupancy. Quote reference EF. Details: 0800 856 8000.

FERRIES

IRISH FERRIES has a special deal for foot passengers, travelling from London to Dublin by rail/ferry, of £59 a person return. The offer is for non-peak dates until December 17. Details: 0171-357 8541.

PASSENGERS on Scandinavian Seaways departing tomorrow can book a two-night trip from Harwich to Hamburg from £69 a person, including cabin, breakfast and a sightseeing tour. Details: 0990 333111.

THE Isle of Man Steam Packet Company is offering weekend specials (Friday-Sunday departures) from Liverpool and Heysham for £119 for a car, plus two adults. A motorcycle and rider travel for £59; foot passengers for £29 (tickets valid for four days). Details: 01624 645645.

BRITANNY FERRIES offers a 10-day one-way ticket, covering a car plus five passengers for £50, on the Caen-Cherbourg and Portsmouth-Caen routes, until the end of the year. Afternoon sailings only. Bookable through Eurodrive. Details: 0181-324 4000.

A Monaco Grand Prix package is available for £499 a person from BAC Sport, using a flight from Gatwick on May 9, two nights' B&B at a San Remo hotel and tickets for the race on May 11. Details: 0171-456 7100

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Bargains flood Bank Holiday

By TONY DAWES

CHEAP holidays by the thousand are available for the coming Bank Holiday weekend, but leading travel agents say these may be the last opportunity to find bargains for peak periods.

They believe that the general election, and the public's failure to accept that the first Monday in May is now a holiday have contributed to the lack of demand, and this has led to the special offers. An extra reason is that today marks the start of the summer season, when an increased number of holidays becomes available for most tour operators.

Leading the field with the best offers is Air Tours, which is unloading

scores of special deals through Going Places, the high street travel agent. Prices start at £95 for a week's self-catering in Majorca, using a flight from Gatwick on Saturday. Several other deals costing about £100 for next week in the Mediterranean are also available.

Thomas Cook is also offering cheap deals to the Mediterranean next week with prices starting at £109. Kosmar, a leading independent Greek operator, is offering a week's self-catering in Crete for £159 per person, with a flight from Gatwick tomorrow.

Low-price deals are also available this weekend at dozens of British hotels. Superbreak, which markets 575 hotels in 300 locations, reports

that savings of between 20 and 40 per cent are on offer. The Athenaeum in London has cut its price from £121.50 a night to £78.60 for guests staying two or more nights from tomorrow to Monday. Prices at the Royal Hotel, in York, are down from £68 a night for dinner, bed and breakfast to £54.40. Bed and breakfast at the Copthorne, in Plymouth, is reduced from £40.50 to £25.

Nick Cusit, Superbreak's joint managing director, says: "This Bank Holiday weekend is a good one to travel because the election has slowed down consumer demand. It is not just city hotels which have special offers; plenty are available in the country. The Damson Dene near Bowness in the Lake District, for

example, is offering dinner bed and breakfast for £54 a night."

Holiday cottages in Britain are also readily available. Farm and Cottage Holidays is offering a 20 per cent discount on farm cottages in Cornwall. Country Holidays, Britain's biggest self-catering operator, has plenty of cottages for four people available next week from £200.

Geoff Cowley, the company's marketing director, says: "These prices rise by about £20 for the second week in May, a further £20 for the third week and by the spring Bank Holiday they can be as much as £100 higher. There is already less choice for the spring Bank Holiday week, which coincides with half-term. We expect a late-booking surge."

The same pattern of rising prices will affect package holidays. The Air Tours special offer to Majorca increases to £219 a week in mid-May and £329 for the late spring Bank Holiday week. A Nile cruise for one week with Destination Red Sea will cost £299, with a flight from Gatwick on May 18, or £319 flying from Manchester, but will be £200 more the week after.

Peter Povey, Lunn Poly's marketing director, says: "Bank Holidays are traditionally a time to get away and you can guarantee that the favourite spots are filling up fast, even if they cost more. People should book now if they want to venture further than their back garden for the next Bank Holiday."

Lakeland village cancels holidays

By TONY DAWES

FAMILIES who had booked breaks over the next ten days at Britain's newest holiday village are being turned away after scores of minor faults were discovered.

The Oasis Lakeland Forest Village near Penrith, Cumbria, planned to open tomorrow and welcome more than 1,000 visitors for a Bank Holiday weekend break but will now remain closed until after the following weekend at the earliest.

The £100 million venture is the first of its kind by a company formed by the Rank Leisure group to capitalise on the growing demand for inclusive holidays in centres with a wide range of attractions, a market dominated in Britain by Center Parcs.

"It was devastating for us to cancel the holidays," Julie Gould, Oasis Villages' communications manager, said. "But we could not credibly bring in paying guests if everything was not perfect."

The faults were found when staff and contractors stayed at the village on "trial holidays" last month. Most problems were in the guest lodges and included faulty cookers, televisions and jacuzzis. The company was also dissatisfied with external features including car park surfacing.

"We had two options when we discovered the problems," Ms Gould said. "We either postponed the opening to allow contractors a clear run to resolve these issues or allowed guests on site with the risk that their stay might be disrupted. We decided to postpone the opening because we are determined not to compromise the quality of the product."

Families who had booked breaks costing between £164 and £300 for the next two weekends and for the middle of next week will receive a full refund and be offered a free holiday to be taken at any time after the village opens. The Oasis management will meet contractors for a full review of the repair work on Tuesday and hopes to announce an opening date afterwards.

Le Shuttle drops 'turn up and go'

By STEVE KEENAN

EUROTUNNEL has dropped its promise to operate a "turn-up-and-go" service on the car-carrying Le Shuttle train through the Channel Tunnel.

This time last year, two-thirds of travellers paid on departure but the company was forced to switch to a pre-booked reservation system when the tunnel blaze halved car capacity last November. Now Eurotunnel has decided to continue to take reservations even when repair work is finished in mid-May.

When the tunnel opened in 1994 tour operators warned that the turn-up-and-go service would overwhelm the company at busy times.

Colin Matthews, director of Matthews Holidays, says: "It is the customers who have been suffering. They believed they could turn up and go, whereas at busy times they were actually turning up and queuing."

The turn-up system is not being completely scrapped, with day trip and business customers the prime markets for last-minute travel decisions. But they will still be expected to call and ask whether space is available.

Bill Dix, the Le Shuttle managing director, says: "Essentially, we will be running a reservation system. We cannot go back to a turn-up-and-go system."



American demands could spoil the "Englishness" of Princess Margaret's holiday island

British called to save Mustique's character

By HARVEY ELLIOTT

PRINCESS Margaret's favourite Caribbean hideaway island of Mustique is attempting to woo "ordinary" British holidaymakers in an effort to halt creeping Americanisation. The 50 shareholders in the Mustique Company, which owns the island and rents out its luxury villas, is worried that the demands and tastes of wealthy Americans could irrevocably change its image.

Brian Alexander, the manager of the island, says: "There is something very special and 'English' about Mustique which we want to retain. The Americans expect to find the same things they would find in Florida resorts. We don't want a golf course, but we do want to keep the cricket pitch, for example. Anyone who insists on playing golf should go to the Royal Westmoreland at Barbados."

He adds: "We have long been considered a private island for rock stars or royalty and everyone else must keep out. But that is not the case and we want as many people from Britain to come as possible to ensure we keep our Britishness."

The company is spending more than £250,000 on a marketing drive to attract more UK holidaymakers. It has even set up a satellite station to receive BBC and Sky television programmes which it can beam into individual properties in place of CNN and other American stations.

Mustique was bought by Colin Tennant in 1959, who created the company — which now provides public services normally paid for by the local authority — from among the villa owners in 1969.

The old 20-room Cotton House hotel, which had become run-down, has been restored and reopened. "Whereas the villas are 60 per cent owned or rented by US holidaymakers, 60 per cent of the hotel rooms are taken by British guests," Mr Alexander says. "Now we want them to take holidays in the villas too."

To buy a plot of land and build a villa on Mustique today would cost at least £1.25 million. "But I am amazed by the number of people who can easily afford

that," Mr Alexander says. "Most are self-employed and successful entrepreneurs. Very few are on a salary."

Eventually the island will have 110 villas, all individually designed and screened from view. Owners have come from all over the world seeking total privacy and luxury, whatever the cost. But for much of the year properties are not used by their owners, who rent them out through the Mustique Company.

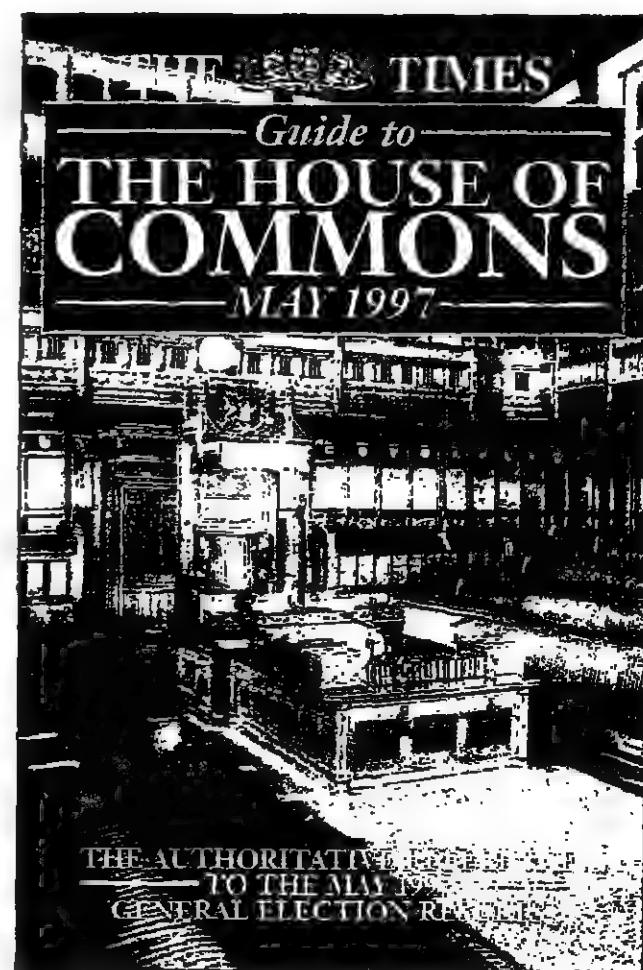
A one-bedroom villa sleeping two people costs from £1,978 a week excluding flights which, with British Airways and Air Mustique, range from around £600 for an economy class ticket to nearly £2,000 for business class. A larger villa, such as the one owned by Patrick Lichfield, costs around £12,000 a week. Both include a number of resident staff and use of a car.

The Cotton House hotel is sold as part of a package through such tour operators as Elegant Resorts and Caribbean Connections, with one-week all-inclusive costing around £1,955 a person.



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Robidoux ends Walker's run at world snooker championship

Hendry on course in quest for record

By Phil Yates

NOT for the first time during this year's Embassy world snooker championship, Stephen Hendry overcame pressure from a determined rival to remain on course for his seventh triumph at the game's blue riband event in eight years.

Hendry's 13-10 victory over Darren Morgan at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, yesterday was his 28th consecutive match there and he must now clear only two more hurdles in order to supersede Ray Reardon and Steve Davis as the most prolific winner of the championship in the modern era.

Morgan, 9-7 adrift overnight, as he had been before unexpectedly edging Ronnie O'Sullivan 13-12 in the previous round, compiled an excep-

tionally 58 break to account for the first frame of the session and drew level at 9-9.

A safety misjudgment from Morgan on the last red allowed Hendry in for the clearance to pink that brought up 10-9 before the Welshman simultaneously potted a red in the early stages of the twentieth frame and screwed the cue-ball in-off. Given Morgan's past tendency to capitulate in the face of such misfortune, it was thought Hendry had weathered the storm by making a 53 break to lead 11-9, but there was to be one further scare for the title-holder.

Morgan, posing fearlessly, collected a 39 clearance to trail 10-11, despite the balls being awkwardly positioned, and he

had a gilt-edged opportunity to draw level in the 22nd frame when he misjudged on a straightforward blue.

Hendry afforded himself some breathing space with a 62 break and Morgan's hopes of becoming the first player to beat him at the championship since Steve James did so at the corresponding stage in 1991 disappeared in the next. With one last throw, Morgan fought back from 62-0 down to 62-37, but missed an over-ambitious pot on the last red using the rest. It was to be his final shot of the match, as Hendry coolly cleared to advance. The result improved Hendry's record against Morgan to 15-1.

Even so, Hendry, clearly possesses a high regard for his victim's ability. "It was a very tough match," Hendry said. "People seem to forget how good Darren can be. I know I didn't knock in many big breaks, but I was very satisfied with my performance and I think if he had beaten me, Darren would probably have gone on to win the tournament."

James Wattana, of Thailand, was a marginal favourite to supply Hendry's semi-final opposition, over the best of 33 frames, as he carried a 9-7 lead over John Parrott, the 1991 champion, into their concluding session last night. Breaks of 46, 82, 69 and a 129 total clearance enabled Parrott, to recover from 5-3 overnight arrears of 5-3 to 7-7, but Wattana, a Crucible semi-finalist four years ago, dominated the closing two frames of the afternoon with runs of 56 — when Parrott failed to complete a simple plant — and 93.

The chances of only the second overseas winner in the championship's 70-year history were further enhanced when Alain Robidoux, a gregarious 36-year-old from



Hendry concentrates on his way to victory over Morgan at the Crucible

Montreal, safely booked his passage into the semi-finals by beating Lee Walker 13-8. Contributions of 113 and 61 were the highlights as Robidoux pulled away from Walker, who was clearly mentally fatigued by his giant-killing exploits earlier in the tournament.

He is also sure to be the underdog when he plays either Ken Doherty or John Higgins for a place in the final. Doherty required only four of the remaining nine frames to progress after a second session in which he carved out a 9-7 lead.

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FOOTBALL

Fifa clear England's World Cup application

SEPP BLATTER, the general secretary of Fifa, the world governing body, emphasised yesterday that England and Germany were both entitled to bid to stage the World Cup of 2006 and at the same time criticised Uefa for their efforts to reshape the rules.

Uefa wanted only one bid per continent for the event, but Blatter stressed: "It is Fifa's World Cup, not a matter for confederations. Every single national association that is part of Fifa has the right to bid." However, he issued a warning. "The fight between England and Germany is for nothing. At this stage, we haven't even opened the official bidding for 2006 — that will come at the end of the World Cup next year, in the autumn."

Blatter pointed out that three African nations — South Africa, Morocco and Egypt — and countries in South America have signalled their intention to bid and he poured scorn on the prospect of Uefa's proposal for one bid per continent being given the go-ahead at next year's congress in Paris. "The statutes of Fifa can be changed next June, but we've so far received no proposals from any confederation."

Blatter, speaking at the Soccerex exhibition at Wembley Conference Centre, said Fifa wished to see the introduction of professional referees, plus the abolition of the sliding tackle and the tackle from behind and he hinted at bad news for those without satellite or cable television. "The World Cup in 1998 is not a problem, it will be broadcast by the so-called official television," he said, "but things will change after that, although I can promise that, in Europe, at least, the first game, one semi-final and the final itself will be available on free TV."

"What we could not accept is the idea of time-outs or the game split into quarters or thirds, let alone the use of third referees in the stands."

TELEVISION CHOICE

Well, perhaps not wonderful

My Wonderful Life
ITV, 8.30pm

Simon Nye is a writer who defies pigeonholing. Having followed the political incorrectness of *Men Behaving Badly* with the amiable idiosyncrasy of *Is It Legal?*, he comes up with a sitcom that is different from either. The tone is grimmer than on the other two shows and the title is ironic. Emma Wray's Donna is not having a wonderful life. She is divorced, strapped for cash and combines bringing up two boisterous daughters with a job as a hospital nurse. In the single mother debate Nye is careful to leave his options open. Donna is no madonna. She is careless with money and liable to shoot her mouth off. But she is a survivor, just, and does not need the snug next-door neighbour (Tony Robinson) to help her how to run her affairs. *My Wonderful Life* has a hard edge but be assured that it is funny as well.

Horizon: The Great Balloon Race
BBC2, 9.00pm

The three attempts in January to circumnavigate the world in a balloon seemed at the time like a branch of showbusiness. But trust *Horizon* to stand back from the media hype and take a cool look at the science. Not that the personalities are ignored. With Richard Branson among them this would be impossible. Nor does the film neglect the political bickering which helped to scupper the chances of the American Steve Fossett. But the emphasis is on the engineering which went into the balloons, the harnessing of the weather and, thanks to on-board cameras, the technicalities of the flight. Branson, Fossett and the Swiss-Belgian crew approached the task in radically different ways. The analysis of their strategies, and why they failed, provides excellent background for the second attempts which will surely come.

Bodyguards
ITV, 9.00pm

Although the pilot programme last year won few critical plaudits, it drew 11 million viewers and with an audience like that a series was inevitable. So here it is, with John Shrapnel as the unglamorous commander of a police protection team which includes the highly glamorous Louise



Schneider and Iannucci (BBC2, 9pm)

Lombard and Sean Pertwee. The challenge for the show will be to vary the plot, which in tonight's episode, as in the pilot, involves saving a foreign VIP from assassination. This time he is a Serb accused of involvement in a massacre. But there is no need to worry about Balkan politics. It all comes down to whether Shrapnel's team can locate the gunman in time, with the complication that the hit squad is holding Pertwee's wife and daughter. The scenario is efficient on the action level, but do not expect subtleties of character or motive.

The Election Night Armistice
BBC2, 10.30pm (not Scotland)

For those who want an election break from the Dumbleby brothers (David on BBC1, Jonathan on ITV), computerised graphics and earnest psephologists, here is a policy alternative. Hosted by the *Antisocial* team of Armando Iannucci, David Schneider and Peter Baynham it is a three-hour live show which, while carrying the election results, will be less reverent about filling the gaps in between. Among promised delights are Valerie Singleton with a bouncy House of Commons, Steve Coogan's Alan Partridge in a link-up from Norwich and a politics-free zone in Manchester. The danger is that if Peter Snow is on form on BBC1 all this could be upstaged. Snow's hilarious ability to get hold of the wrong end of the swingometer threatens to leave the satire boys at the starting post. Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

Analysis: A Separate Place
Radio 4, 8.00pm

Questions, questions, questions: all of them concerned with children's rights, all of them really important, and most of them not amenable to easy answers. Frances Cairncross's investigation into the child's place in an increasingly adult world seeks replies to posers such as: who is to take responsibility for coping with child delinquency? Should children be punished in ways that are more adult? What should happen when children say things the adults don't agree with? Should children be as free as adults are in deciding the nature of their medical treatment? Cairncross comes to the conclusion that the one right above all others to which a child is entitled is the right to loving parental care.

RADIO 1

7.00am Kevin Greening 8.00am Simon Mayo 12.00am Jo White, including at 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00am Nicky Campbell 4.00am Bob Jones 6.00am Newsbeat 7.00am Alan Parrott 8.00am Steve Lamacq and John Peel present Barclay's Playlist 9.00am Death in Vegas and Linnorock on stage at Brixton Fridge 10.30am Mary Anne Hobbes 1.00am Dave Pearce 4.00am Clive Warren

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30am Wake Up to Wogan 8.30am Ken Bruce 11.30am Richard Ainsworth 1.30pm Debbie Thompson 3.00pm Ed Stewart 5.00pm John Dore 7.00pm David Allen 8.00pm Paul Jones 9.00pm Andy Peebles 10.30pm Show 8.50pm David Allen 10.30pm The News Hour 11.00pm Jimmy Young's Election Night Special with John Peel 1.00am Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00am The Breakfast Programme 8.00am The Magazine with Diana Macln 12.00pm Midday with Mark 2.00pm Race on Five 4.00pm Inverleaze Nationwide 7.00pm News Extra 7.30pm The Death of Football (S4C) 8.00pm Inside Edge with Rob Jones 9.00pm Sportsweekend with Alan Ford 9.30pm Sportsweek with Adrian Goldberg 10.00pm Election 97. Coverage of the results through the night

TALK RADIO

5.00am Chris Ashley and Sandy Warr 7.00pm Paul Ross 8.00pm Scott Cranham 12.00pm Lorraine Kelly 2.00pm Tommy Boyd 4.00pm Peter Dinkley 7.00pm Moe Dine's Sportszone 10.00pm James White 1.00am Ian Collins

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Andrew MacGregor, includes Boozher's (Symphony No 7 in D; Dvorak) (Cello Concerto in B minor); Haydn (Symphony No 84 in A; Bravura (Piano Trio in E flat, Op 40); Ljungqvist (Life Words for a Summer's Day (Sage); Pleyel (Symphony in C) 9.00am Morning Collection, with Penny Gore, includes Schubert (Piano Sonata); Butterworth (A Shropshire Lad, excerpts); Mozart, arr. Greg (Fantasia in C minor); Grieg (Lyric Suite) 10.00am Musical Encounters, with Edward Blakeman, includes Barber (Adagio for Strings); Liszt (Piano Sonata); Ravel (Tzigane); Britten (Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings); Hahn (Piano Concerto in E) 12.00pm Composer of the Week: Haydn 1.00pm Eastern Approaches. The series in which Rodric Dunnell explores Eastern European opera. Includes excerpts from Kodaly (Hary Jancs) (Brindavis); Szymanowski (King Roger) (4/4) 2.00pm Quartet Trice. The last in a series of three concertos given by the Hagen Quartet. Schumann (String Quartet in A, Op 41 No 3); Mozart (String Quartet in F); Schubert (String Quartet in G) 3.30pm The BBC Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, under Jerzy Maksymiuk. Shostakovich (Symphony No 9) 4.15pm Ensemble. Penny Gore introduces a recital by Andrew Wilde, piano. Beethoven (Sonata in C, Op 27 No 2, Moonlight); Schubert (Fantasy in C, Op 760, Wanderer) (5) 5.00pm Music Machine. Verity Sharp talks to Laura Lee Davis about Madonna and women in the 1980s 5.15pm In Touch with Brian Morton, includes Dengiz Bates (Candide Still Ficker); Mozart (Andante in

C); Glass (Evening Song); Berlioz (Nuits d'été); Byrd (What Pleasure Have Great Princes) 7.30pm The Silbass Experience (Sounding the Centenary). Live from the City Hall in Glasgow, the first of six concerts by the Silbass Ensemble, a Symphony Orchestra under their chief conductor, Osmo Vanska. With Christian Lindberg, trombone. Schostak (The Wood Nymph); Sibelius (Don Quixote) 8.00pm Silbass Ensemble. A look at the composer through the eyes of Sir Thomas Beecham, Walter Legge and Sir Charles Young 8.40pm Concert Part Two. Silbass (Symphony No 5) 9.25pm Lorraine Kelly. A look at Manfred von Richthofen, otherwise known as the Red Baron, whose transformation from sporting gentleman to daring wartime pilot gave rise to a legend mythology (4/5) 10.00pm Music Machine. Anthony Rolfe introduces rarely heard sacred music by the 15th-century English composer John Benet, performed by the Oxford Consort 10.45pm Patrick Wright profiles the Swiss director and film-maker Luc Besson whose *Playing with Fire*, starring Emmanuelle Béart, opens tonight at the Nottingham Playhouse 11.30pm Composer of the Week: Haydn introduces the final concert in the series of three, recorded at Ronnie Scott's in Birmingham, featuring Andy Sheppard's Moving Image 1.00 Through the Night, with Donald Macleod, includes 1.00am Concerto Evensong, from Worcester Cathedral (1) 2.00am Chamber Music (Mozart) Zampieri, soprano; Luigi Fucini, alto, cello, Eduardo Parra, piano. Includes works by Patti, Schubert, Pachelbel, Donizetti, Mercadante and Proch 3.30am Schools 5.00 Sequences

RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping Forecast (LW) 6.00am News Briefing 6.10am Farming Today 6.25am Prayer for the Day 6.30am Today, includes Thought for the Day 6.55am Weather 9.00am News 9.05am The Moral Maze, with Michael Buerk, David Cook, James Daley, Michael Mansfield, QC, and Dr David Starkey 10.00am News, includes (F4). The comedy serial by Sacha Gervais and Shalimar Khan focusing on the lives of a group of young Asian women. With Zina Sattar and Shari Patel (2/4) 10.00am Daily Service (LW) 10.15am On This Day (LW) 10.30am Women's Hour, with Janet Murray, includes a report from Diana Appleyard on the success rates at secondary schools specialising in technology and languages 11.30am From Our Own Correspondent. Reports from BBC correspondents from around the world 12.00pm News, Youth and Youngs. Consumer news and current affairs with Mark Wintchester 12.25pm Kelly's Heroes. Chris Kelly explores the life of the designer Umberto Eco, who recently died after slipping on a cultured pear. With contributions from Annabel Giles and Professor Graham Norton (4/4) 12.55pm Weather 1.00am The World at One, with Nick Clarke 1.40am The Archers (1) 1.55pm Shipping Forecast 2.00pm News; Thursday Afternoon Play: A Civil War, by R.J. Gillis. Based on the making of John Huston's film *The Red Badge of Courage*. Starring David Hale and Rob Saxon (1) 3.00pm News; The Afternoon Show. Sue Elliot talks to two women who meet at a motoring service station so that they can play *Scrabble* together 4.00pm News; 4.05pm Kaleidoscope. Paul Allen reviews *Things We Do For Love*, the latest play from Alan Ayckbourn in Scarborough, and *Mother Courage* at free TV

at the Nottingham Playhouse 4.45pm Short Story. The Best Novel, by Gillian Triggs. The story of a young novelist who is selected to represent her country in an international competition. By Nina Wadia (1) 5.00pm 5.50pm Shipping Forecast 6.00pm 6.05pm News 6.10pm The Archers 7.00pm Molly's Ashes. Chris Harbon takes his mother's ashes to Gibraltar for burial. He plans to fly her to rest in the grounds of the cathedral where she was confirmed, but he also hopes to find somebody who remembers his mother so that he can learn more about her life 8.00am Analysis. See Choice 8.05am Uncle Mont's Celtic Fiddle. The continuation of Peter Trinderwood's comic odyssey starring Stephen Thorne as Uncle Mont, and Sean Kelly as Ciarán Brandon (2/5) (1) 9.00pm Does He Take Sugar? The programme made for, and by, people with disabilities 9.30am Kaleidoscope (1) 9.55pm Weather 10.00am 10.05am Election 27. James Naughtie presents a simultaneous broadcast with Radio 5 Live featuring comprehensive coverage from around the country as the results of the poll come in. Includes (approximate times) 1.00pm The result from Tony Blair's constituency of Sedgefield 1.15pm The result from Paddy Ashdown's constituency of Yeovil and the important Stirling, seat of Michael Forsyth 2.30pm The result from John Major's constituency of Huntingdon 4.00pm Live coverage of the speeches and celebrations from the parties' election headquarters 5.00pm Final analysis and reaction to the results from around the country

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.8-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.8. LW 198. MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 893, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 645. LW 100 (198-225kHz). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8. MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1069. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thompson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

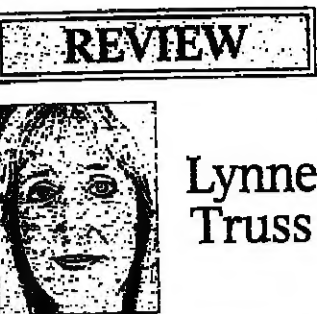
Let your guard down, along with your hair

A famous definition of writing is that it's turning your worst moments into money. Recently, for example, I got home from holiday to find that somebody else's cat had been trapped in my house for two days, and had panicked with predictable consequences for the furniture. It was definitely one of my worst moments. "All right to the mill, though," I expect, smiling a neighbourly smile, "gagging and dejected, I forced sofas and cushions to the cleaners. Grin to the mill! I smiled weakly and adjusted the peg on my nose. Some things are funny instantly. But your house used as a cat house? The comic potential of that situation has taken quite a lot longer to announce itself."

But last night's *Modern Times* Shampoo (BBC2) proved among other things that it isn't just writers who bury their own experiences for gain. Many of us, it seems, use our worst moments

simply in an effort to entertain our hairdresser. "So I come home, and the man is gone!" yelled one woman last night, looking straight into the camera (the mirror). Another discovered her husband had a second family down the road, with children and everything! Tragedy as half-good anecdote, that's what this was. Behind their clients' heads, the hairdressers sniggered and combed and exclaimed "No!" but as conversation it was hardly satisfactory. A client with wet hair combed like a curtain told a story of abandonment, sickness and debt, but either her story was too complicated or her veil too thick, because nobody cared. Besides, she was better. You never get sympathy if you're bitter.

From the trailers and pre-publicity, *Shampoo* had looked cheap and easy: it was in fact a clever, instructing film. Despite their sensational revelations, it wasn't about the individuals in the chair, or even their narcissism. By placing the camera behind the mirror, Emma Hewitt drew attention to the sheer alienating oddness of two people talking in each other while looking in the same direction. Conversation bounces off a reflecting surface, while one person works and the other relaxes. To the hairdresser, it's all routine. "Tip your head for me! Would you like some mousse?" To the client, even though cloaked in a nasty gown like a straitjacket, it's a rare period of total self-indulgence.



Lynne Truss

How appropriate that cut was the great skill of *Shampoo*. Severely and confidently, each strand of the story was combed, cut, trained, shaped. The wife-swapping man, the naturist man, the big-nosed lady with the enormous rollers — all played their part, just so. Whether the sum of human knowledge has been advanced by such a

film is debatable, but who cares? At hairdressers throughout the land today, people will be talking about it — and incidentally addressing their own reflections at the same time.

Over on BBC1, the new series of *The Antiques Roadshow* turned up just three days after the last one ended. This felt like sufficient interval to me. Hugh Scully took us down Memory Lane (Ipswich)

to revisit former exciting finds, and then on the flimsiest pretext struck off for *HMS Victory* (Purmouth) to discuss Horatio Nelson and forget about antiques altogether. Evidently, he indicated rectangular wooden platters — origin of the expression "a square meal". I have never seen Scully look so happy.

The only disappointment of these special retrospective shows is that they ignore so much of the potential for dramatic follow-up. In every decent *Antiques Roadshow* encounter, a punter is left holding a vase worth £8,000, in which they formerly kept the dog biscuits. Well, since this was clearly a life-altering experience, what happened next? Did they drop the vase? Did they tell it and regret it? Did they discover the experts were wrong? Half the snobbish enjoyment of the *Roadshow* is the spectacle of unworthy owners saying lamely of a watercolour masterpiece "Well, I

always liked blue". Were they perhaps shamed into studying history of art after their appearance on the *Roadshow*? All those stories ripe for picking. Hugh, and you're begging about with trays.

Channel 4's new series *Planet Showbiz* looks set to be unmissable. It's full of quirky anecdotal stuff to talk about at the hairdressers, for a start. Mark Lamarr's good nature (as team captain on *Shooting Stars*) has always belied his rather repulsive sartorial style. In *Planet Showbiz* he gets genuinely funny, off-the-wall stories from America, and seemingly allows himself to enjoy the process. How refreshing. He doesn't try hard to be clever, and comes across as a star.

Since next week will be my last as a television critic, it suddenly becomes an urgent matter to find good stuff to watch in my retirement years (as I fancifully refer to

my new job as an insanely under-qualified sports writer). *Planet Showbiz* deserves another look, as does the series *Heroes of Comedy*, which I believe I would certainly watch anyway, even if not contractually obliged. But how do normal people choose what to watch on telly? I have no idea. Are you allowed sometimes to switch off and read a book, or do they take your licence away? Six years I've been doing this job. I've forgotten that telly is optional.

Anyway, last night's *Heroes of Comedy* tribute to Alastair Sim was a delightful programme about a delightful actor, survived by delightful friends and family. Sim's daughter never minds, for example, when people say how good he was in *The Ladykillers*. "Alec Guinness got the fee, but my father got the kudos," she always says, to cover other people's mistake. Well, what a gracious way of dealing with it.

- BBC1**
- 6.00am BBC Breakfast (45772)
 - 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (1) (23573820)
 - 9.00am Change That (3474875)
 - 9.00am Skyline Challenge (3533401)
 - 9.45 Kyles (7255449)
 - 10.30am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (52420)
 - 11.00am News (1) Regional News and Weather (7039949)
 - 11.05 The Really Useful Show (7499994)
 - 11.35am Change That (5599229)
 - 12.00am News (1) Regional News and Weather (7039949)
 - 12.05pm Call My Bluff (The word game with Sami Tokovic and three columnists Alan Conn (8204571))
 - 12.35 Good Living (745371)
 - 1.00pm One O'Clock News (1) (62888)
 - 1.30pm Regional News (8003254)
 - 1.40 The Weather Show (8003257)
 - 1.45 Neighbours Melissa discovers enough is enough and goes to his marching orders (1) (40173819)
 - 2.10pm Soccer '97 World Championship Dougie Donnelly introduces the opening session of this year's first semi-final at the Crucible in Sheffield (8393139)
 - 3.30 Playdays (1) (8546739) 3.50 Postman Pat (5050333) 4.05 Felt the Cat (1) (7996265) 4.20 Jilly Jekyll and Herbie Hyde (1) (7977130) 4.35 Return to Jupiter (1) (8597339) 5.00 Newsnight (1) (4003751) 5.10 No News (1) (655197)
 - 5.35 Neighbours (1) (772284)
 - 6.00 Six O'Clock News (1) (65)
 - 6.30 Regional News (1) (17)
 - 7.00 Watchdog Healthcheck Toyah Wilcox examines non-prescription treatments for asthma. Plus, all the latest science, science and health stories, with special reports from Alice Baker, John Morrison and Angela Ripston (1) (5807)
 - 7.30 EastEnders Gita makes amends with her mother-in-law, while Joe seems suspiciously calm after his outburst (1) (71)
 - 8.00 Animal Hospital Husband-and-wife vets Sally and Ian Paine invite Steve Knight back to their home to meet all 30 of their pampered pets. Plus, more medical mysteries (1) (655)
 - 8.30 Keeping Mum Andrew has a feast of recreation and invites former wife Kate on a date. Interfering mother-in-law Peggy makes it her mission to give them an evening they'll never forget. Stephanie Cole and Martin Bell star (1) (6002)
 - 9.00 Nine O'Clock News (1) (144523)
 - 9.25 Blackadder: The Third: Death and Dishonour (1) (722577)
 - 9.55 Election '97 David Dimbleby hosts the BBC's biggest ever single programme in an in-depth analysis of tonight's results as they come, with news, news, what repercussions they may have on the nation's future. Jeremy Paxton will be giving the politicians a hard time with his tough questioning, and Peter Snow will use his swingometer and state-of-the-art 3D graphics designed to keep us up to date with the proceedings (1) (85098110)
 - 5.30am Regional News and Weather (252229)

- BBC2**
- 6.00am O.J.: The Great In and Steel Rollercoaster (7575739) 6.25 Roads for Roads (757555)
 - 7.15 See Hear News (8127449)
 - 7.30 Teenage Turf (1) (8332401) 7.55 Blue Peter (1) (1439150) 8.20 Fireman Sam (1) (8228187) 8.35 The Raccoons (8533333) 8.40 Developing World (8533333) 8.45 Chatterbox in Town: What's New (3476333) 8.45 Watch Out (7850791) 10.00 Teletubbies (86197) 10.30 Storyline (8050739) 10.45 The Experiment (4047829) 11.05 Space Ark (7021159) 11.15 Moving to English (1) (854223) 11.25 Showcase (837272) 12.00 Testament (1) (14642)
 - 12.30pm Working Lunch (1284)
 - 1.00pm One O'Clock News (1) (62888) 1.30pm Regional News (8003254) 1.45 Numberline (8006333) 2.00 Fireman Sam (1) (10992420)
 - 2.10 Alice Adams (1935, b/w) Comedy drama with Katharine Hepburn. Adaptation of Booth Tarkington's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. Directed by George Stevens (1) (154739)
 - 3.55 News (1) and weather (5800739)
 - 4.00 Soccer: World Championship Semi-final action (5804)
 - 6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Sisko takes Jake into the wormhole to witness a rare phenomenon (1) (800791)
 - 6.45 Soccer (853333)
 - 7.30 East: The Tiger Trap New series. Insight into the battle to save the Bengal tiger (1) (1)
 - 8.00 Regional Programmes (2197)
 - 8.30 Top Gear: The Mercedes E Class Elegance estate and BMW's touring version of the 5 series (1) (1804)
 - 9.00 Soccer: The Great Ballon Race An insight into attempts to drumbeat the Earth in a hot air balloon (1) (4888)
 - 10.00 Have I Got News for You Richard Wilson and Nick Ross join regulars Ian Hislop and Paul Merton (1) (15371)
 - 10.30 Election '97: The Polling Stations close, Jonathan Dimbleby presents live coverage of the 1997 general election results, with only a few short hours to go until Britain knows whether it is under Labour or Conservative rule. Also in the studio are Michael Burslem, Alastair Stewart and Sue Lawley, who discuss the outcome of an exit poll before the real results begin to roll in. Including at 10.10pm ITN News and weather, plus regional updates throughout the night (7525913)
 - 4.00 Planet Rock Profiles (4043579)
 - 4.25 ITN Sport Classics (1) (40415314)
 - 4.50 Sound Bites (4043568)
 - 5.00 The Time, the Place (1) (35376)
 - 5.30 News (20227)

- HITV**
- 6.00am GMTV (4042642)
 - 9.25 Supermarket Sweep (1) (8241420)
 - 9.55 Regional News (3378555)
 - 10.00 The Time, the Place (36323)
 - 10.30 This Morning (8225825)
 - 12.20 Regional News (8682449)
 - 12.30 News (1) and weather (7484868)
 - 12.55 What You Were Here (8723158)
 - 1.25 Home and Away (7084265)
 - 1.50 Afternoon Live (40151246)
 - 2.20 Vanessa (1) (4034817)
 - 2.50 Afternoon Live (2088197)
 - 3.20 News (1) (8721555) 3.25 Regional news and weather (872052)
 - 3.30 The Redden (1) (8074913) 3.40 Wizards (1) (835423) 3.50 Rupert (853523) 4.15 Mike and Angelo (1) (4407082) 4.40 Sweet (8616555)
 - 5.10 A Country Practice (7394081)
 - 5.40 ITN Early Evening News (1) and weather (201802)
 - 6.00 Home and Away (1) (866150)
 - 6.25 ITV Weather (775468)
 - 6.30 The West Tonight (3)
 - 7.00 Emmerdale An angry Bill confronts his mother, while the Dingles roll out their red carpet in anticipation of a visitor (1) (9325)
 - 7.30 3-D A visit to a retirement village for pensioners in Phoenix, Arizona, asking whether it's an old people's haven or a ghetto of the future (1) (7)
 - 8.00 The Bill: Payback Beach and Carver have to piece together evidence to find the real culprit in a vicious attack, when neither the suspect nor the victim can remember (1) (582913)
 - 8.30 My Wonderful Life New comedy series, sharing the trials and tribulations of a hard-up, no-nonsense nurse (Emma Wiley) (1) (8130)

- CENTRAL**
- As HTV West except:
 - 12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (7232159)
 - 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (7394081)
 - 6.25 Central News (874178)
- WESTCOUNTRY**
- As HTV West except:
 - 12.55 Home and Away (8562604)
 - 1.20-1.50 Emmerdale (22633420)
 - 5.10-5.40 Home and Away (7394081)
 - 6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (13401)
- MERIDIAN**
- As HTV West except:
 - 12.55-1.25 Shortland Street (7232159)
 - 5.10-5.40 Home and Away (7394081)
 - 6.00 Meridian Tonight (33)
 - 6.30-7.00 Grass Roots (3)
- ANGLIA**
- As HTV West except:
 - 12.55-1.25 A Country Practice (7232159)
 - 5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (7394081)
 - 6.25-7.00 Anglia News (157284)
- SAC**
- Starts: 6.00am Sesame Street (61710)
 - 7.00 The Big Breakfast (25197)
 - 9.00 Bewitched (82456)
 - 9.30 Film: Down to Earth (5580062)
 - 11.30 Kamehameha Journey (88888)
 - 12.30pm Ricki Lake (36352)
 - 1.00m Sit Melville (50671820)
 - 1.15 Desi Desi (55621325)
 - 1.30 Film: Watch Your Stern (34705623)
 - 3.10 Avondale Dogs (3263389)
 - 3.30 Collectors' Lot (91)
 - 4.00 Fifteen-to-One (6)
 - 4.30 The Great Owl of the Mountain (10)
 - 5.00 5 Pump (1081)
 - 5.30 Countdown (82)
 - 6.05 Heno (877265)
 - 6.35 Bob Vn Deau (742130)
 - 7.00 Pobi y Cwm (867536)
 - 7.25 Talm y Beirdd (245333)
 - 8.00 Yng Nghewni - Caryl (7265)
 - 8.30 Newyddion (6772)
 - 9.00 Heroes of Comedy: Alastair Sim (2284)
 - 10.00 Ethelred 97 (488081)
 - 10.15 Llyth y Bole (118082)
 - 10.50-4.00am Ethelred 97 (11885642)

- RTÉ**
- Starts: 7.00am News (5927488) 9.00 Teatime (2050591) 9.10 The Elephant Show (845468) 9.40 Archaeology (403178) 10.10 Material World (1832246) 10.30 Drop Dead (2772268) 11.00 The Nationwide (2515642) 11.30 Take the High Road (2519371) 12.00 MacGyver (451825) 1.00pm Cinnitine Nuachtas (53015130) 1.25 Oireachtas Report (82054284) 1.45 News and Easy Cooking (9543082) 2.05 The Champions (9525081) 3.00 Live at Three (2541473) The Car from Radio 1 (255) 3.30 Consuming Passions (35786333) 5.30 Second Thoughts (8020213) 6.00 The Angelus (1177710) 6.01 Six-One (4040710) 7.00 Fair City (810389) 7.30 The McQuinn Show (858062) 8.30 The Garden Show (148387) 8.30 The Years of Change (1350082) 9.00 The Nine O'Clock News and Weather (250278) 9.30 Prime Time (1250246) 10.10 Cracker (9750223) 11.10 Prime Time Special (1833449) 1.10am A Prayer at Bedtime

- CHANNEL 5**
- 6.00am Sesame Street (1) (61710) 7.00 The Big Breakfast (25197) 9.00 Bewitched (1) (1) (82456)
 - 9.30 Down to Earth (1947) A fantasy musical with Rita Hayworth as a muse who arrives on Broadway from heaven. With Larry Parks. Directed by Alexander Hall (5580062)
 - 11.25 Growing Animation (1057555) 11.30 Kamehameha Journey (1) (38888)
 - 12.30 pm Light Lunch (39178)
 - 1.30 Cyclists Abroad (A British Transport film (80522449))
 - 1.50 Lease of Life (1954) A drama about a village vicar who is told he has only one year to live. With Robert Donat, Adrienne Cori, Denholm Elliott, an agency Welsh. Directed by Charles Frend (1) (46426265)
 - 3.30 Collectors' Lot (1) (91) 4.00 Fifteen-to-One (1) (5) 4.30 Countdown (1) (10) 5.00 Ricki Lake (1) (1081) 5.30 Pet Rescue (1) (62)
 - 6.00 Springfield Father McGilley has some bad news for Liz and Trish, finds a new friend in Eva (1) (75)
 - 6.30 Hollyoaks Tony and Marilyn arrive back from a holiday in hell and Ruth is paying more attention to Kurt than to her levels (1) (5)
 - 7.00 Channel 4 News (1) includes headlines and weather at 7.30 (3772)
 - 8.00 Mad About Machines Ron Wankling's fixation with mechanical tricks and gadgets (61) (7265)
 - 8.30 Taste of the Times Sophie Grigson uses a delicious, confounding and honey to make a traditional Mexican meal with Karma Kois (1) (8772)

- CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE**
- Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder N 63 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequency: 10.92075 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.20 MHz.
- 6.00am 5 News Early (8155371)
 - 7.30 Havalakoo (5600791) 8.00 Adventures of the Bush Patrol (8850913) 8.30 WideWorld (8858284)
 - 9.00 Espresso Consumer affairs magazine (2897536) 10.00 Exclusive (1) (744449) 10.30 The Great Garden Game (1) (8839420)
 - 11.00 Leesa Chat show (5504240) 11.50 Double Espresso (34807710) 12.00 The Bold and the Beautiful (1) (8820772) 12.30pm Family Affairs (1) (1) (4322791)
 - 1.00 5 News Update (49258710) 1.05 Sunset Beach Glossy soap (3919333) 2.00 5's Company, Live entertainment (7431062)
 - 3.30 The Lady from Yesterday (1965) starring Wayne Rogers and Bonnie Bedelia. A happily-married man finds his life turned upside down when a beautiful woman from his past re-enters his life. Directed by Robert Day (3788604)
 - 5.20 5's Company: Let's Extra (35786333)
 - 5.30 100 Per Cent Game show without a host (8602913)
 - 6.00 Whittle Quiz game hosted by Tim Vine (1) (860928)
 - 6.30 Family Affairs The continuing saga of the Hart family (1) (880178)
 - 7.00 Exclusive Gossip (6110389)
 - 7.30 Wild States The wildlife of Florida's mineral-rich townships Springs (1) (889062)

- CHALLENGE TV**
- We have Prime Time live on hour 5.00pm Live with (827585) 5.30 Family Fortunes (75265) 6.30 Countdown (84875) 7.05 Sale of the Century (15371) 7.40 One to One (151924) 8.20 The Clued Up (151994) 9.00 Through the Keyhole (90738) 9.35 Challenge TV's Invention (26258) 9.55 Buzzman's Hot (84468) 10.05 Treasure Hunt (32265) 11.20 Live at First Sight (81478) 12.00 Sale of the Century (151924) 12.30 Live at First Sight (81478) 12.50 Live at First Sight (81478) 1.00 Live at First Sight (81478) 1.30 Live at First Sight (81478) 1.50 Live at First Sight (81478) 2.00 Live at First Sight (81478) 2.30 Live at First Sight (81478) 3.00 Live at First Sight (81478) 3.30 Live at First Sight (81478) 4.00 Live at First Sight (81478) 4.30 Live at First Sight (81478) 5.00 Live at First Sight (81478) 5.30 Live at First Sight (81478) 6.00 Live at First Sight (81478) 6.30 Live at First Sight (81478) 7.00 Live at First Sight (81478) 7.30 Live at First Sight (81478) 8.00 Live at First Sight (81478) 8.30 Live at 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